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ACTS OF THE APOSTLES:

EDIFYING DISCOURSE OR HISTORICAL NARRATIVE?

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Ph. D.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Name of Candidate : John James Coutts.
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Title of Thesis : Acts of the Apostles: Edifying
discourse or historical narrative?

Intro. and : The reputation of Luke-Acts has varied
Chapter 1. : greatly. It has been acclaimed as a work
of the highest historical value by some,
and dismissed as tendentious and unreliable
by others. Recent study has emphasised that
the author was an original theologian, and
has suggested that his theological concerns
meant more to him than the recording of
historical facts.

Chapter 2. : J.C. O'Neill has claimed that Luke was a
contemporary of Justin martyr, and the first
of the Christian apologists. We dissent from
this late dating, but find value in his
comparison of Acts with Hellenistic Jewish
missionary literature.

Chapter 3. : The book of Acts is compared and contrasted
with the books of Maccabees, the letter of
Aristeas, and certain writings of Philo.
The author, while holding to theological
principles, is found to be concerned to
present a record of fact.

Chapter 4. : We consider traditions about the earliest church recorded in Acts 1 - 5, with conflicting estimates of their reliability. Adopting Erich Auerbach's distinction between saga and history, we conclude that the author has attempted to deal, as an historian, with material some of which reached him in the form of saga.

Chapter 5. : The enigmatic figure of Stephen is studied, together with the Hellenists who appear in chapter 6. We conclude that Stephen was a real historical figure and that the speech in Acts 7 reflects something of his views. We consider attempts to link Stephen with the Samaritans and the community at Qumran.

Chapter 6. : Paul is a key figure in Acts. Should the Paul of Acts be compared or contrasted with the Paul we meet in his letters? We argue , against Professor J. Knox, that Acts is a source of much reliable information about Paul, and that Acts and the Pauline letters are complementary to each other.

Chapter 7. : Recent study has tended to the conclusion that the author of Acts had few, if any, written sources. We consider the 'Itinerary' theory - that he used a travel-document giving a list of Paul's stopping-places.

Chapter 8. : We consider various forms of the 'Antioch source' theory - that the author made use of a written record produced within the church at Antioch. It is argued that if written sources cannot be precisely identified, this does not mean that the author had none at all.

Chapter 9. : The speeches of the books of Acts are considered. We discuss the attitude of ancient authors to the composition of speeches in historical writing. The speeches attributed to Peter and Paul are considered. It is concluded that they do not simply represent the theological views of the author. He has used source material of various kinds to present the thoughts, if not the precise words, of the apostles.

Chapter 10.: In conclusion it is argued that current emphasis on Luke as theologian has gone too far. Neglect of the historical and 'human interest' side of his work is a symptom of a failure of nerve, for his writings offer a valuable corrective to the inhumanity of much contemporary literature and art.

Prologue.

The monk Muirchu did for St. Patrick what Luke did for St. Paul, and has been criticised (by N.J. White, St. Patrick, his writings and life, p.5) for portraying the historical Patrick as a 'somewhat vindictive saint.' But his Preface shows that he had 'the root of the matter in him,' and offers good guidance to students of the past in general and of the Lucan writings in particular. It may stand as prologue to the present work.

' Forasmuch as many, my Lord Aedh, have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration according to that which their fathers and those who from the beginning were ministers of the word delivered to them-- but these writers never attained to one sure track of history, on account of the extreme difficulty of the task of story telling, and because of conflicting opinions, and the very many surmises of very many persons. Therefore, if I mistake not, as our popular proverb has it, 'Like bringing boys into a council meeting', I have brought the infantile rowboat of my brain into this most dangerous and deep ocean of sacred story, where mountainous seas rage and swell, amidst sharpest rocks lying in unknown seas, an ocean on which no boat has yet ventured, save only that of my father Cogitosus. However, that I seem not to make a great thing out of what is small, I shall assay, in obedience to the command of thy holiness and authority, to unfold, piecemeal and with difficulty, these few out of the many actions of St. Patrick. My skill is small; my

Prologue (cont.)

authorities are uncertain;my memory is treacherous;my
intelligence is worn out;my style is poor;yet the
feeling of my love is most pious'. (White,p.72).

Introduction

Critics past and critics present.

In the year 1735 Dr. George Benson published a handsomely printed work in two volumes, entitled; 'A history of the first planting of Christianity.'

Dr. Benson's account of Christian origins - 'the study and care of some years, as far as health and other affairs would permit' - was based on a wide knowledge of the literature - notably Acts, the Pauline letters, and contemporary secular historians. Like the author to Theophilus, on whose work he based so much of his own, Dr. Benson had various secondary objectives in mind,* but his grand design was no less daring than that of the author of Acts, and was expressed in one of the several appendices attached to his work; 'In which it is shown that St. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles, and that as the Acts contain a true history, Christianity must be true'.

This rather defensive note, which concluded Dr. Benson's double volume, would have seemed strange to the author to Theophilus, who left his hero at Rome, 'teaching about Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered,' (Acts 28:31). For Luke - as we shall henceforth call him - 'from convention, if not from conviction' - ** was pre-

* One of which was 'to rectify the mistakes of Dr. Conyers Middleton'.

** H. J. Cadbury: 'The Book of Acts in History' p.3.

-occupied by other challenges and felt other concerns than did Dr.Benson.

Yet the Dissenting Divine was not consciously on the defensive:'It is not much above two hundred years' - he wrote - 'from the commencement of the glorious reformation.Since when the Protestants have not yet been able entirely to shake off the spirit of infallibility and persecution.We live,indeed,in a day when liberty is in the ascendant;-thanks be to Heaven, for the inestimable blessing of the illustrious house of Hanover! but it is scarce an age,since liberty,the greatest of temporal blessings,was precarious.It is therefore no wonder that the study of the scriptures (as well as of other arts and sciences) is capable of improvement:and that by free enquiry,some things are found to have been misrepresented,in the ages of darkness and tyranny.'

Dr.Benson had put his learning to good use.He was well aware of the reading of the 'Cambridge Manuscript' (Codex Bezae) at Acts 11:28,'which intimates that the first time (Luke) is mentioned,in the scripture,he was at Antioch in Syria.'But he also relied heavily on the traditional argument from prophecy and miracle:'Even the miraculous and extraordinary facts,there related,were not impossible to the divine power to which they are universally ascribed.Neither are they improbable:

considering the grand design and occasion of them.'

'Yet this most venerable argument was already partly offset by a tendency to rationalise: the Pythoness at Philippi, for example, 'was perhaps a lunatic person, and was believed by the people to be possessed by the spirit of Pythian Apollo or a spirit of divination.'

More modern than ancient, too, is his careful estimate of the value of the narrative of Acts: 'The planeness and simplicity of the narration are strong circumstances in its favour. The writer appears to have been very honest and impartial, and to have set down, very fairly, the objections which were made to Christianity, both by Jews and heathens... he has likewise, with a just and honest freedom, mentioned the weakness, faults and prejudices, both of the APOSTLES and their converts; there is a great, and remarkable harmony, between the occasional hints dispersed up and down in St. Paul's epistles, and the facts recorded in this history. In so much, that it is generally acknowledged, that the history of the Acts is the best clue, to guide us, in the studying of the Epistles written by that APOSTLE'.

Points like this will be made, and with justice, by defenders of the historicity of Acts from Paley to Sir William Ramsay. The contrary will be asserted by sceptics from Reimarus to Loisy - and by none with more vituperative scorn than by Reimarus himself; 'Such tales

can only be believed blindfold by a santimonious simplicity. To a healthy mind they are a mockery and a laughing-stock. And although Luke imagined, thirty years afterwards, when the age allotted to men was well-nigh spent, that he could with impunity write miracles and unscrupulously* circulate them in the world, there were then, as there are now, some sensible people who could perceive imposition and falsehood in all their nooks and crannies, and who readily knew how to distinguish them from truth'.*

No doubt both Benson and Reimarus were correct to see a connection of some kind between the Lucan authorship of Acts, its historicity, and the eternal validity of the Christian faith. But if the malice of Reimarus was too cheap, the confidence of Benson was too optimistic. Already in 1729 he had lost his pastoral charge at Abingdon because of his 'Arminian sentiments', and in spite of his scholarly achievements Glasgow refused him an honorary doctorate in 1744. One of the Professors 'spoke with abhorrence of him as an avowed Socinian'. Clearly the Protestants had not been able to shake off entirely the spirit of infallibility and persecution. Whose version of the faith,

* Fragments from Reimarus; ed. C. Voysey: London 1879, p 118

after all 'must be true'?*

Up to the present day the critical pendulum has continued to swing, if a little less violently. An anthology of comments will make this clear:

* Information on Benson is found in the DNB Vol. IV, pp255-6. He was an interesting example of those English Dissenting thinkers, of whom Joseph Priestley was the most distinguished, who moved from strict Calvinism via Arminianism into Unitarianism and beyond. He seems, however, not to have reached the further stations on the line. He combated the Deists to the left, while maintaining the 'reasonableness of the Christian religion' in the style of John Locke. He was a man of profound piety, even if his via media turned out to be a dead end. The titles of his tracts and sermons give us a glimpse of his mind:

'A brief account of Archbishop Laud's cruel treatment of Dr. Leighton'.

'A brief account of Calvin's causing Servetus to be burned for an heretic'.

'The gospel, a revealed mystery'.

'A summary view of the evidences of Christ's resurrection'.

'The necessity and advantages of universal liberty and free enquiry'.

'A thanksgiving sermon, upon account of the suppression of the rebellion, 1746'.

As to the date of Acts, Harnack was able to write, 'In the use of 'ta ethnē' and 'holaos' St. Luke, the Gentile Christian, has kept quite closely to the idiom of the Septuagint. The fact that in the book the Christians are never called 'ho laos' is a strong argument for its high antiquity.*

According to Haenchen, on the other hand, the word 'kardiognostēs' - God-the knower of hearts - 'is a favourite expression of post-apostolic Christianity! **

Overbeck, who was much influenced by the Tübingen school, was able to say that, in Acts, the church's attitude to Rome 'brings it with great probability into the age of Trajan, (obit A.D. 117) and lends the Acts the character of an immediate forerunner of the so-called apologetic literature which flourished in the age of the Antonines. To the same date are we perhaps led by the dogmatic point of view of the Acts generally'. ***

But F.F. Bruce feels led to no such conclusion: 'Artistic and powerful as the conclusion is, it is strange that Luke has not told us what the result of Paul's appeal was... it would be satisfactory to say that he

* Harnack: Acts of the Apostles p. 51.

** Haenchen: Apostelgeschichte p. 127.

*** Zeller and Overbeck: Acts of the Apostles: Vol. 1. p. 272.

wrote no more-because he completed his book at the end of the two years-probably in A.D.62.*

And as a spokesman for the middle-of-the-road position on date, we may take R.P.C.Hanson.** 'It is highly likely that the Church-State relationship reflected in the affairs of Ignatius and Pliny had developed by the year 90 A.D. It is not one which is compatible with the language of Acts about the Roman government...in the author of Acts we are dealing with somebody who lived during the first century and not the second...'

Historicity: Thus, while critics vary in their choice of date from A.D.62 to the middle of the second century, they differ just as widely in their estimate of the book's historical reliability: here for example, is the great champion of the historicity of Acts, Sir William Ramsay.

'Our hypothesis is that Acts was written by a great historian, a writer who set himself out to record the facts as they actually occurred: a strong partisan indeed, but raised above partiality by his perfect confidence that he had only to describe the facts as they occurred, in order to make the truth of Christianity and the honour of Paul apparent.'***

* F.F.Bruce: Acts of the Apostles p.481.

** R.P.C.Hanson: Acts of the Apostles; (New Clarendon Bible pp.5, 11)

*** Ramsay: Paul the Traveller; p.14.

But very different is the view taken by S.G.F.

Brandon:

'The clearly tendentious nature of the narrative of Acts strongly suggests a clue to understanding the motive which actuated its author in composing it. As we have seen, he was concerned to depict the evolution of primitive Christianity under a very special guise, which meant that probably many formative factors were deliberately ignored'.*

Here Luke can hardly escape the charge of bad faith! His honest intention, if not his historical reliability, is rescued by Haenchen, who sees him as making good quality bricks with a minimal quantity of straw.

'Already in these few verses we see Luke's literary artistry. From the comparatively limited material which he possesses he creates scenes of great vividness and lively activity. He arranges them skilfully and links them together. But in recounting this story' (the replacement of Judas: Acts 1; 15: 26) 'Luke was not concerned with what people try in part to extract from it nowadays: information about the organisation of the primitive church'.**

And as a curious example of a moderate position we note this remark by Harnack; 'I owe an explanation

* Brandon: The fall of Jerusalem p.208.

** Haenchen; Apg. p.129.

to Prof. Blass, and to Prof. Ramsay, Weiss and Zahn. The results at which I have arrived not only approach very nearly to, but are often coincident with, the results of their own research... But the case presents points of difference. These scholars are influenced, partly by presuppositions in reference to the Canon of the New Testament, partly by the conviction that miracles really happened, and partly by both these prejudices'. (!)

The purpose of Acts

Lastly we note that scholars have differed just as widely in their estimate of the aims and interests of Luke, the man, the historian, and the theologian. Conzelmann, for example, nails his colours to the mast and writes; 'This study of St. Luke's theology is, for the most part, not dependent on any particular theories about St. Luke's Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles, for it is concerned with the whole of Luke's writings as they stand'. *

Such a judgement takes us a long way from C.C. Torrey, who could write: 'Luke seems to have been singularly free from any personal interest in theological matters, and apparently had no considerable aptitude for studies in that field... His own interests were mainly practical

* Theology of St. Luke p.9.

and humanitarian..'*

Opinions therefore continue to differ about the purpose of Acts.Prof. Ernst Haenchen, for example sees it as an 'edifying work' (Erbauungsbuch) designed to uplift and inspire the second generation of Christians. Conzelmann declares: 'Our aim is to elucidate Luke's work as it stands in its present form, not to enquire into possible sources or into the historical facts which provide the material'.**The effect of this 'self-denying ordinance' would seem to be to cast doubt on the reliability of Luke the historian. 'Luke's whole account of the primitive community and law,' he writes, 'proves to be something composed in the light of redemptive history, and not a historical record in the modern sense'.***

The current trend was thus summarised by Bishop J.W.C. Wand: '(Luke's) reputation as a historian is fast being overtaken by his new renown as a theologian. It has been a matter of surprise that the writer who was accepted as the most objective of the evangelists is now seen as a teacher with definite views of his own'.

On the other hand, the reliability of Luke still has many defenders: the mantle of Sir William Ramsay

* The composition and date of Acts p.57:58.

** TSL p.9.

*** TSL p.161.

rests on Prof.F.F.Bruce,while the late Arnold Ehrhardt, who agreed that Luke had his own axe to grind,was 'Confident that he recorded events which really happened'^{*}. A recent study of the Lucan writings,by Dr.I.H.Marshall, makes a point on the same side of the question:'It is our contention that a proper balance needs to be achieved in the study of Luke...(who)is both historian and theologian...the best term to describe him is 'evangelist',a term which,we believe,includes both the others'.**

Thus a further study of the Books of Acts may be worthwhile.The swing of the critical pendulum can indeed be paralleled in other branches of New Testament studies and elsewhere in the literary field.We shall follow Dr.Marshall in arguing that Luke was much more of a historian than recent work has allowed,and we shall put in a plea for the practical and humanitarian,if non-theological Luke,for we believe that those Lucan values^{are} of particular interest at the present time both in the church and throughout the 'oikoumene'.To quote

* Framework of the New Testament stories,.p.101.

Ehrhardt noted that the historian,Ed.Meyer,was much more ready to give an answer,if a qualified one,in the affirmative,than many theologians.

** Luke,Historian and Theologian;p.18.

the Church Times of October 16 1970: 'Humanism in the best sense of this much misused word, coupled with an appreciation of the reality of what is more than human, is the hallmark of this apostle and evangelist who so marvellously delivered the true doctrine of the Saviour for the healing of the souls of men'.*

Our point has been trenchantly put, with reference to the study of the gospels, by Dame Helen Gardner: 'Much of the literary criticism of the gospels in the nineteenth century may be justly charged with sentimentality'. Its authors might retort upon some of their successors the countercharge of inhumanity. It is a charge which can be brought against much of the art and literature of this age'.**

* A splendid example of the 'Erbauungsstil' of the Church Times.

** Helen Gardner: The Business of Criticism.p.157.

CHAPTER 1.

Some recent estimates of Luke - Acts.

In 1965 Dr.E.L.Mascall published his book 'The secularisation of Christianity'-a critique of Dr.P.Van Buren's work 'The Secular Meaning of the Gospel' and of Dr.J.A.T.Robinson's 'Honest to God'. In his preface* Dr. Mascall placed side by side two extended quotations:the first is from Dr.M.D.Goulder's 'Type and History in Acts;'among other things Dr.Mascall quotes the following:

'Factual integrity was not the only standard that St. Luke set himself.It is not,or not only,as the liberal and form critics supposed,that St.Luke intended to write a 'true' account,but was hindered by his limitations of knowledge.It is that St.Luke never intended to write a 'true' account of the church's early years at all,in the sense that his book should exclude any story for which he had no evidence in Christian tradition.Symbol was a factor of weight at least comparable to fact with him.St.Matthew believed that things for which he had no evidence and which were in fact untrue, came to pass,that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets.St.Luke believed this too,but he was not content to write about them in two or three lines as did his predecessor...It is the myths of St.Luke which dominate the Christian calendar'.**

* p.XII

** Type and History in Acts p.179:205

As against this Dr.Mascall quotes Mr. A.N.Sherwin-White:
'However one accepts form-criticism,its principles do not inevitably contradict the notion of the basic historicity of the particular stories of which the Gospel narratives are composed,even if these were not shored up by the external guarantee of their fabric and setting.For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming;any attempt to reject its basic historicity,even in matters of detail,must now be regarded as absurd.Roman historians have long taken it for granted.'*

Dr. Mascall goes on to make clear that he is on the side, if not of the angels, then of Mr.Sherwin-White.He writes;'It is only right to add that Goulder recognises the need for the typological method to be kept under some form of control...Nevertheless many of his typological identifications seem to be extremely speculative ...One is left with the feeling that with sufficient ingenuity,the method could be used to reach any conclusions that one wished.And the general conclusion,that Luke abandons factual narrations altogether when he sees he can make a telling theological point, even to the extent of fabricating completely the stories of Ascencion Day and Pentecost, strains credulity to the utmost.As Goulder himself asserts,it means that Luke was both a fundamentalist and a poet,and that he did

* Roman Society and Roman Law p.188:189.

not realise that there was any contradiction between the two.(p.204)And in view of the words with which he begins his gospel,it would also mean that he was a liar of no mean order.'*

Now the conflict between the literalist and the symbolist is no new one.It can be traced as far back as the dispute about Biblical interpretation between the schools of Antioch and Alexandria.'We do not forbid'-said Diodore-'the higher interpretation or 'theoria', for the historical narrative does not exclude it... We must,however,be on our guard against letting the 'theoria' do away with the historical basis... '**

This seems apposite as a criticism of M.D.Goulder and of his master,the late Dr.A.M.Farrer.In like manner Eustathius of Antioch attacked the methods of Origen in Biblical studies,and maintained,for example,that

* Mascall, op cit.p.281.

** Quoted in J.N.D.Kelly:Early Christian Doctrines, p.76:77.Dr.Kelly thus summarises the Antiochene idea of 'theoria':a)the literal sense of the sacred narrative should not be abolished. b)there should be a real correspondence between the historical fact and the further spiritual object discerned,and c) that the two objects should be apprehended together,though of course in different ways.

the Medium at Endor really did bring up the spirit of Samuel from the dead as is reported by 1Sam.28.*

No doubt psychological attitudes and the cultural climate predispose critics to take an Alexandrian or** Antiochene view; all who study the past do well to remember the parable of the Mote and the Beam, and it may be that consideration of the text should be preceded by psychoanalysis of the critics. Yet if objectivity will always remain an ideal on the critical horizon, that is no reason for abandoning the search for it.

What then of the views of Mr. Sherwin-White? His Sarum lectures came as a relief to students who wished to maintain that the synoptic gospels and Acts are reasonably close to the historical events which they

* Origen had offered a rationalisation: the woman was really a ventriloquist. That this is still a live issue in some parts of the world may be seen from J.V. Taylor's account of his visit to a medium in Uganda. (The Primal vision: p.145:150)

** Let us entertain a pleasing conjecture: might not Luke himself - or the author of the 'Antioch source' - be the first 'Antiochene' opposing the wild speculations of Alexandrians in general - the spiritual sons of Philo - and Apollos in particular? (Acts 18:25) Unfortunately St. Ignatius will hardly fit into our chain of theory.

claim to describe. Summoned as a witness by Dr. Mascall, he is also frequently quoted by another recent critic, Prof. R. P. C. Hanson:* Nor is this surprising, when Mr. Sherwin-White declares: 'It is astonishing that while Greco-Roman historians have been growing in confidence, the twentieth century study of the gospel narratives, starting from no less promising material, has taken so gloomy a turn in the development of form criticism that the most advanced exponents of it apparently maintain- so far as an amateur can understand the matter - that the historical Christ is unknowable and the history of his mission cannot be written.'** Compare, on the other hand, the attitude of Roman scholars towards Tiberius or the Gracchi! The sources are as fragmentary and divergent as in the New Testament material, but none has regarded the figure of Tiberius Caesar as forever lost to us or abandoned the quest for the historical Gracchi!

Mr. Sherwin-White's method, is basically, to show that the trials of Paul and of Christ tally with the known practise of Roman law. It is conceded that the gospels are less circumstantial than Acts, and that Acts offers more significant detail in the latter part of the book. This is due to geography however:

* In the New Clarendon Bible edition of Acts.

** Roman Society and Roman Law p.187 (in future cited as 'S.W.')

'that the degree of confirmation in Greco-Roman terms is less for the gospels than Acts is due to the differences in their regional setting. As soon as Christ enters the Roman orbit in Jerusalem, the confirmation begins... Yet Acts, is, in simple terms and judged externally, no less a propaganda narrative than the gospels, and liable to similar distortions'.

Much of this argument has been familiar since the time of Sir William Ramsay. Luke has got his local colour right: 'politarchs' and the 'demos' at Thessalonica (Acts 17;5,6): Asiarchs at Ephesus (19;31) and Publius the 'Chief Man' (Protos) of Malta (Acts 28;7) - a title which has been confirmed by the discovery of an inscription with the words *Primus Melitensium*.*

*The present writer has always found the title ascribed to Publius a most striking proof of accuracy, and good evidence for the presence of an eye-witness on Malta. It is extraordinary difficult to get chieftancy titles correct if one is not closely acquainted with the chief or his people. The same point is made by S.C. Neill: The interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1961, pl43. What outsider can explain the precise significance of the Alafin of Oyo, the Alake of Abeokuta, or Sir Ian Moncrieffe of that ilk? The latter has described how his ancestor, prisoner in the Tower of London in 1542, described himself as 'Muncreff of the Same' for the benefit of the English.

But is accurate circumstantial detail a sign of firsthand knowledge or of reasonably accurate research? Are 'vivid touches' proof of an eye-witness or the sign of a lively imagination? A second-century Luke, working with a minimal quantity of tradition, could have been right about the Asiarchs and Politarchs. But Sherwin-White argues that the various points of legal procedure that are evidenced in the trials of Paul belong to the Flavian period and not later.

One problem, it would seem, is that records are scanty for this period and a major source is the book of Acts itself! But it is argued that the attitude to Roman citizenship seen in Acts 'breathes the climate of the earlier phase' - when citizenship was still the precious privilege of a few. Thus Paul's claim at Philippi - 'They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned men who are Roman citizens', (16;37) strikes the same chord as does the complaint of Cicero; 'The crosses that Verres set up for condemned slaves he kept in hand for Roman citizens who had been given no trial'. It does not fit in so well with the epoch of Pliny, when citizenship had been devalued and widely conceded to the mass of provincials. Pliny complains of unsuitable treatment given to a Roman knight, who was beaten, condemned to the mines and finally strangled.* New social strata were being formed,

* unius equitis Romani...erat enim fustibus caesus, damnatus in metallum, strangulatus in carcere. Ep. 11;11;8.

and Paul's claim fits in well with the period of Nero, rather than with the second century.

So too with the famous appeal to Caesar: 'In its reference to 'Provocatio' it is in accord with what is otherwise known of the practice in the first century A.D.' Just as Acts knows nothing of the class distinctions of the later empire, in which Roman citizenship was common and the 'honestiores' (middle class) were the privileged group, so it knows nothing of the later system of 'appellatio' under which 'appeal to the emperor is universally allowed - except in the case of notable brigands...and ringleaders of sedition...The judge now tries the case and gives his sentence, and then the condemned party appeals, whereas in the earlier period the judge either did not try the case at all, or at most made a preliminary investigation and left the issue to be decided by the emperor'. Paul's appeal fits in with the earlier procedure, while the development of the later system can be seen in Pliny's handling of the Christians. He refers promptly, and without prompting, to Trajan for advice. Furthermore, the trial of Paul contrasts interestingly with that of the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne. Here Attalus of Pergamum..."was actually being marched round the amphitheatre when the legate was informed that he was a Roman. He was forthwith removed and put into custody

in the company of others about whom the legate had written to the emperor and was awaiting his reply.* This procedure, says Sherwin-White, is half-way between the old 'provocatio' system and the later 'appellatio' system which came in after 212 A.D., when all except slaves had become Romans, but some Romans were very definitely more equal than others. 'In Acts we have a procedure that fits neatly into an early place in a developing historical series that advances from the Augustan phase, through examples in Pliny and Eusebius drawn from the second century, towards the system of the late Empire'.

Comparing the work of Sherwin-White with that of Goulder, we find ourselves in different worlds. The former links the New Testament documents with their contemporary secular setting: Paul's appeal to Caesar is related to the requirements of the Lex Julia. The publicans of the Galilean narrative are similarly compared and contrasted with the 'many Italian money-lenders who harried Asia in the age of Sulla and Mithridates, and who repeated the performance in the lifetime of Christ in Gaul, and later in Britain'.**

* A.H.M. Jones, 'I appeal to Caesar' papers presented to D.M. Robinson. p. 918ff also in *Studies in Roman Government & Law*, p 51 ff.

** S.W. p. 141.

Goulder, on the other hand, looks to the Old Testament scriptures, as well as to the Rabbinic tradition, for possible parallels: consider the 'cause célèbre' of Ananias and Sapphira. It is a difficult story on any view, and presents moral as well as historical problems. In his 'Penguin' translation of Acts E.V. Rieu was upset because Peter seemed to be deliberately trying to strike Sapphira dead. Various rationalisations have been suggested—for example, it may be that the unhappy couple died suddenly and in mysterious circumstances, and that their unexpected end, especially if they had defrauded the church, was seen as the Lord's doing. P.H. Menoud has suggested that the unhappy pair were in fact the first believers to die, and so to shake the idea that all would survive to the parousia. All these theories are possible; our own view is that while oral tradition can both simplify and adorn a tale, it rarely creates one 'ex nihilo.'

But Mr. Goulder's method is different. For him the important point is that Ananias is the same name as Hananiah, who died because he opposed the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 28). Similarly the Ethiopian eunuch is the anti-type of that other African, Ebed Melech, also a eunuch, who drew Jeremiah up from the pit. 'Especially relevant is the discourse in Luke 12, which was written' (presumably by Luke, not by Jesus?) 'partly

with Ananias in mind.'*

But we have not finished with Ananias yet: 'Ananias is, outside the book of Jeremiah, an honourable name like Judah, and St. Luke is concerned to show that the place of the false Ananias is filled as well as the place of Judas Iscariot. We find Saul accordingly visited and baptised by a true Ananias, and that we may not miss the overtone, this ^{is} done in the house of a third Judas'.

Until we read 'Type and History in Acts' we had, alas, missed the overtone. Interest in hosts and lodgings is one of the characteristics of Luke: we had supposed that Judas who lived in the street called Straight was included, like ^NMason the Cypriot, Simon the Tanner, Martha, Lydia the Seller of Purple, and Philip the Evangelist and his four unmarried daughters, for the sake of local colour and human interest. Our Luke had been the old-fashioned, non-theological, 'Antiochene', and 'liberal-Protestant' Luke. But more important than the reactions of modern readers is this question: Would the 'Most Excellent Theophilus' have noticed the point which Luke (or Mr. Goulder) was making about Ananias? Would he have perceived the overtone? If he was a high Roman official, we doubt it. And even if we regard Theophilus as a catechumen or friendly enquirer we

* Goulder p.232

must still say no: what new recruit would have been so well read in the scriptures as Goulder's theory presupposes? It is in the fantasies of apocalyptic, and not in Luke-Acts, that the symbolic meaning prevails over the literal.

We suspect that to resort to typology in the twentieth century is to betray a failure of nerve. A profoundly original and creative mind, such as Mr. Goulder's teacher, the late Dr. A. M. Farrer, possessed may not find its best outlet in New Testament criticism: the 'shaping spirit of imagination' may see more in another man's work than was intended. Could it be that Biblical scholars who turn to typology are really making a virtue out of necessity? The quest for the historical Jesus having failed, there is nothing left to do except to rely on the church and its liturgy (Is this the view of Prof. John Knox?), or to make an act of existential commitment (Bultmann) or resort to typology (Dr. Farrer and Mr. Goulder). Yet it may be doubted whether Heidegger or the historic liturgy will prove an adequate substitute for the friend of publicans and sinners.

'For this relief, much thanks', then, was the reaction of several moderate students of the New Testament to the work of Mr. Sherwin-White. 'Roman historians have long taken it for granted' is indeed music in the ears

of those who defend the general reliability of Acts. But exactly how much is being claimed?

In his Essay 'I appeal to Caesar' Prof.A.H.M. Jones does indeed seem to take Acts for granted.* Thus he writes: 'The scanty evidence of this right of appeal is conflicting...the most famous case is that of Paul...When Festus, the procurator, proposed to try him on the charges made by the Jews, he appealed to Caesar, and Festus, having consulted his consilium, allowed the appeal to go forward, and after investigating the case sent him under military escort to Rome, where he was handed over to the Praetorian Prefect. From these facts, (our italics) it would seem that a Roman citizen was protected against arbitrary flogging without trial, and could, if accused, refuse to submit to trial by appealing to Caesar. If, however, he consented to be tried and was condemned, it would appear that he could lawfully be flogged and executed'.

This judgement arouses mixed feelings. Clearly Prof. Jones thinks highly of the later chapters of Acts as a historical source. The book is used to reconstruct historical events along with Josephus, Pliny and the 'Res Gestae'. But is this because confirmation of historicity is overwhelming? Or is he simply ignoring

* Jones: Studies in Roman Government and Law :51ff, ...

the latest edition of the Meyer Kommentar?

Consider, therefore, how Prof. Jones handles the New Testament traditions in his book: 'The Herods of Judea': 'Of the loyalty of the masses Antipas was less sure. His reign was troubled by two religious revivals. One was headed by John, the son of a priest named Zacharias, who went about Peraea proclaiming the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God. His doctrine was to all appearances harmless: he only told the people to repent of their sins and be washed in the Jordan in token of their change of heart, where he was popularly nicknamed John the Dipper.'

Here the Lucan tradition about Zachariah is accepted, and Prof. Jones further accepts the Markan account of the death of John, ('Salome had been coached what to say to her mother, and asked for John's head on a dish') as against that of Josephus, who links John's death with the defeat of Antipas by the Arabs. Here, furthermore, is the account of Jesus:

'John was followed by another revivalist, in Galilee this time, Jesus of Nazareth. Antipas did not interfere with him. According to the gospels he was filled with a superstitious fear that Jesus was John come back to life.. More probably he was putting off the evil day... In the event his procrastination was justified. Jesus was arrested at Jerusalem, where he had gone to

celebrate the passover, and Antipas was spared the unpopular task of dealing with him. The procurator, Pontius Pilate, ... tried to fob off the responsibility on to Antipas, ... (who) wisely refused to have anything to do with the case. ... There can be little doubt that he was relieved at the death of his troublesome subject. He showed his gratitude to Pilate by abandoning the hostile attitude which he had hitherto, ever since the incident of the shields, adopted towards him'.

It is clear that Prof. Jones accepts the general historicity of the trials of Jesus before Antipas and Pilate. A synthesis is constructed from Josephus (the shields) and the gospel tradition, which is not, however, accepted uncritically. The same general method is followed when Paul appears on the scene: Acts and Josephus are woven together:

'The accused was a Jew of Tarsus: his cognomen was Paulus, and it is curious that, much as we are told of the man, and proud though he was of his Roman citizenship, we are left in ignorance of his full Roman name'.

The Roman historian seems to 'take Acts for granted' in his account of the trials of Paul:

'Festus thought the man, a harmless crank: too much study has addled your brain, Paulus, he remarked genially at the conclusion of the speech.'*

* The Herods of Judaea: p. 231-3.

The book then switches back to the Josephan account, and proceeds to deal with Agrippa's troubles in Jerusalem over the high priesthood.

In his preface, Prof. Jones discusses the various sources for Herodian history. Relying to a great extent on Josephus, whose divided loyalties and dubious motivations, must, he says, be carefully allowed for, he thus estimates the value of the New Testament tradition: 'The Gospels and Acts provide some specific historical information and a most illuminating picture of social conditions in the first century A.D.'

This estimate will command general agreement: but how much of the material is 'specifically historical'? It certainly seems that Prof. Jones is more optimistic than many New Testament specialists. Could this be set down-if with some impertinence in referring to Prof. Jones-to an amateur's lack of familiarity with the material? Sherwin-White justly observes: "Scholars attempting to deal with two worlds of this magnitude require two lives. We must appear as amateurs in each other's fields." Or could it be that New Testament scholars are prone to 'falling over backwards', and favouring the sceptical side, out of misplaced chivalry? Has too much study of a limited body of material, not addled their brain, but led them to Doubting Castle if not to Giant Despair? One admires the masterly and balanced suspension

of judgement which characterises Prof.D.E.Nineham's commentary on Mark, but wonders whether, if these methods were applied to all ancient sources, any positive reconstruction of ancient history could be made at all?

Consider Haenchen's treatment of the stoning of Stephen: 'Luke did not know how a legal stoning was carried out- we know it from the Tractate Sanhedrin: the first witness struck the condemned...down from the edge of a steep precipice. If he did not hereby lose his life, the second witness dropped a block of stone onto his chest...Luke is thinking of quite another method.*In reality (In Wirklichkeit!) the condemned man had to take off his clothes...but Luke thought that the witnesses had to remove their outer garments so that they would be better able to throw stones at Stephen'.

Now this simply assumes that, against the account in Acts, the method prescribed in Sanhedrin is the only correct one! But the Rabbinic tract may only be describing the 'ideal'(!) way of doing it. What happened if there was no steep precipice nearby? That there were exceptions to the Rabbinic rule appears from the tradition that Simeon Ben Shetah hanged forty witches in one day 'because the time demanded it.'**

* H.p.247

** B.J. 2:254-260

Haenchen further finds it incredible that Peter could have addressed three thousand people on the Day of Pentecost-and without a microphone! But he has taken no account of Whitefield's exploits on Kennington Common, or John Wesley's preaching at Gwennap pit.

One further example of this tendency may be looked at: the incident of the Egyptian who allegedly led four thousand men of the Sicarii out into the wilderness. Here, says Haenchen, Luke has confused three separate incidents reported by Josephus: 'The Egyptian led 30,000 men round about from the wilderness to the Mount which was called the Mount of Olives, and was ready to break into Jerusalem by force from that place.' The group who went out into the wilderness were not recruits to the guerilla cause, however, they were deluded enthusiasts waiting for the appearance of the Messiah.* These should be sharply distinguished from the real freedom-fighters or terrorists. According to Haenchen, Luke has confused all three groups, and what is more, the 30,000 who were led by the Egyptian had no military intentions. Josephus, in the War, has turned an unarmed

of the civil war was frequently used together.

* Ant 20;8;6 According to Haenchen the mob expected the Messiah to appear on the Mount of Olives. Josephus may have had good reason to play down the Messianic and military side when he wrote the 'War', but Ant. 20;8;6 makes it clear that a fight took place.

Messianic rabble into an Army.

It seems clear that whoever is allowed to be right, it will not be Luke. The tradition of Josephus is preferred even though the latter contradicts himself. The coincidence of the traditions is ignored, and so is another point in Luke's favour-his much more reasonable statistics (4,000 as against 30,000)*

It is not our intention to argue for the entire accuracy of Luke-or even, on this point, of Claudius the Tribune. We wish to query a method which seems to

* One further note on Luke and Josephus. It has often been noted that the story of the boy Jesus in the temple (Lk. 2; 21-50) parallels an account which Josephus gives of his own boyhood. The gospel says that Jesus was 'found sitting among the teachers and asking them questions'. He was not, as some popular hymns imply, giving all the answers! It is Josephus who declares; 'When I was a child, and about fourteen years of age, I was commended by all for the love I had to learning; on which account the high priests and principal men of the city came then frequently to me together, in order to know my opinion about the accurate understanding of points of the law'. (Life; 1; 2) It is the young Josephus, and not the Lucan Jesus, who lays claim to have been a theological prodigy!

assume that wherever the New Testament overlaps with other ancient records, the New Testament must always be wrong.

There seems to be a prima facie case for thinking that the scepticism of Prof. Haenchen is exaggerated; the non-theological historian, as represented by A.H.M. Jones or A.N. Sherwin-White does not seem to be more optimistic about the value of New Testament evidence than is the theologian. On the other hand, Sherwin-White finds it necessary to make certain disclaimers: 'Acts' he declares, 'is not a police-court record'. Let us note, however, some other close and interesting linguistic parallels between Acts and first century documents: Claudius complains, in his letter to the Alexandrians, that some of the Jews are 'κοινὸν τινὰ τῆς οἰκουμένης νόσον ἐξεργάζοντες

The same accusation is levelled at Paul': λαλοῦν, καὶ κινεῖν τὰς στάσεις πᾶσι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην. 'Acts 24:5.

It is evident says Sherwin-White, that the narrative of Acts is using contemporary language. *To this perhaps an even more interesting parallel may be added. The Jews at Thessalonica complain that αἱ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἀναστατώσαντες αὐτοὶ καὶ ἐνθάδε πάρασιν. Acts 17:6 This remark closely resembles the complaint which the

* S.W.p.51.

Alexandrian leader Isodore makes about the Jews themselves. The text as reconstructed by Musurillo reads:

σοὶ δε, Ἀγρίππα, πρὸς ἃ εἰσῆγεί περὶ Ἰουδαίων
ἀντικαταστήσεται. ἐνκαλῶ αὐτοῖς ὅτι καὶ ὅλην
τὴν οἰκουμένην θέλουσι ταρασσέναι. *

Yet the historian has critics from his own side of the fence. Thus Prof. M. I. Finley of Cambridge has written: 'An Oxford historian, Mr. A. N. Sherwin-White, has recently insisted that the life of Christ as told in the gospels and the life of Tiberius as related by Tacitus, or the account of the Persian Wars in Herodotus, are all of a kind, subject to the same tests and having the same general aims. "Not" - he adds - "that one imagines that the authors of the gospels set to work precisely like either Thucydides or Herodotus." Not precisely - not at all! He has forgotten that the Greek word at the root of history is 'historein' - to enquire - which is what the writers of the gospels..did not set out to do. The latter bore witness - an activity of an altogether different order. Thus in R. G. Collingwood's justly famous dictum: 'theocratic history is not history proper..but a statement of known facts for the information of persons to whom they are not known, but who, as worshippers of the God in question, ought to know the deeds whereby

*Acts of the Pagan Martyrs, ed Musurillo p.23.

he has made himself manifest.'*

Prof. Finley concluded that the New Testament writers sought to bear witness, and not to enquire, and that their writings are 'historiographically unpromising'.

The verb 'historein' is certainly not common in the New Testament; - in fact it appears only once, in a crucial passage in Galatians: *μετὰ ἑτῇ τρία ἀνῆλθεν εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν.* (Gal. 1:18)

What did Paul mean when he said that he went to Jerusalem to 'historein' Peter? They must have talked, as C.H. Dodd remarked, about something more than the weather. Was it then that Peter told Paul what he knew of the sayings-tradition of Jesus? and if so, were the two apostles within the meaning of Collingwood's 'theocratic history - a statement of known facts for the information of worshippers

* M.I. Finley : 'Aspects of Antiquity': his comments occur in a sympathetic review of M. Goguel's 'The Primitive Church'. Collingwood's 'justly famous dictum' occurs in 'The Idea of History' p.14.

to whom they are not known?*

* HISTOREIN KEPHAN is the title of an interesting essay by G.D.Kilpatrick (N.T.Essays ed.A.J.B.Higgins, p.143-149). It is really curious that the Fathers reject the usual meaning of 'historein' - to seek information from. 'Paul was not learning from him or receiving any correction from him', declared John Chrysostom; and Theodoret said: 'Not as though he needed human teaching- for he had received all this from God- he offered fitting honour to the chief apostle'. (loc.cit.p.144-5). However, Prof.Kilpatrick prefers Liddell and Scott to Chrysostom and Theodoret, and concludes, against the fathers, that Paul did 'get information about Jesus from St.Peter'. 'We know then of one kind of information for which St. Paul would go to St.Peter rather than St.James: information about the teaching of Jesus and his ministry Paul εἶδον Ἰάκωβον καὶ ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ κυρίου (Gal 1;20) but he did not 'historein' him, What then of Paul's gospel, received not from men 'by revelation? (Gal.1;12) It was to preserve the uniqueness of this, says Kilpatrick, that the Greek fathers denied the plain meaning of 'historein'. But 'euaggelion' in Galatians does not mean simply information about Jesus: it means the good news of the facts and their interpretation. If Prof.Kilpatrick is right about the meaning of 'historein' in Galatians then both Peter and Paul were as well aware as Collingwood of the distinction between witness and enquiry-a point of some interest to historians and theologians alike!

Prof. Finley's point needs careful consideration. Clearly much of the New Testament does not consist of straightforward historical narration. Unlike the younger Pliny, Paul did not prepare his letters for publication - a fact which we might think makes them more 'historiographically promising', not less, since the apostle took no trouble to conceal from posterity what he did not want posterity to know: 'For my part - he told the Corinthians' - if I am called to account by you or any human court, it does not matter in the least... My judge is the Lord. So pass no premature judgement.)* Pliny, on the other hand, was anxious that posterity should think well of him, and thought it worthy of note that his writings could be mentioned along with those of Tacitus.

If then the epistles are not history proper, they are pure raw material for history. But what of the gospels, and what, in particular, of Luke-Acts? Is the

* 1 Cor. 4:4-4. Contrast here the younger Pliny, with his delight in legal questions and his discreet admiration for the stoic opposition to Domitian which he had never publicly joined! The Roman administrator and the apostle to the Gentiles present a fascinating contrast in what current jargon calls 'life-styles'. It recalls the contrast between David Hume and Dr. Johnson, or Pascal and Voltaire.

blunt 'not at all' of Prof. Finley justified? Was the intention of the evangelists to enquire, or to bear witness? are these activities mutually exclusive?

Surely Luke at least - whatever one thinks of Matthew, Mark and John - must be exempted from Prof. Finley's generalisation! 'It seemed good to me, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an account for you, most excellent Theophilus.' The prologue to the third gospel reveals an author who aspires, however imperfectly, to be numbered among the Hellenistic historians. Claims to 'autopsia' may be exaggerated or conventional; the 'orderly account' which is offered may present a theological rather than a historical order, but the writer clearly shows himself aware of the need for enquiry. He could not bear witness if he had not first enquired.

And here one takes issue with Prof. Finley. To bear witness and to enquire are not of necessity self-contradictory. Clearly, Luke, as a believer, writes from the standpoint of faith. Clearly too his reconstruction of the career of Jesus was, like that of any other historian, affected by his presuppositions of faith or unfaith. But to concede this, is not to deny all reliability to the tale he tells. Consider the famous account of Christian origins which Tacitus gives in laconic Latin prose: "Christus, from whom the name had

its origin suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius Caesar at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and the deadly superstition, thus checked for the moment, broke out again, not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but also in the city, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world meet and become popular.^{14*}

This, as has been noted before, is a succinct account of the story told in Luke-Acts, with value judgements reversed; nor is it clear that the distinguished Roman with his loaded language (*execrabilis superstitio - omnia atrociora*) has achieved any greater objectivity than the third evangelist. Tacitus may well have enquired (*historein!*) into the beliefs of the Christians, just as Pliny felt it necessary to use torture to enquire into the 'perverse and extravagant superstition' that he encountered in Bithynia. But his verdict seems to be the one given at the trial of the Mad Hatter: sentence first, verdict afterwards'.

Certainly many writers on the Christian side were equally biased. The nasty exultation of Lactantius over the deaths of pagan emperors comes to mind. How then does one approach any historical figure with whose claims or philosophical presuppositions one disagrees?

* Ann 15:44

Surely there must be empathy - 'a willing suspension of disbelief' - a readiness to see the point of view of the other fellow. Such greatness of mind was manifested by Aeschylus when he wrote 'The Persians'. One would like to concede it also to Tacitus, when he praises the German virtues and puts his great indictment of Rome into the mouth of a Caledonian chief (*solitudinem faciunt-pacem appellant*). But did Tacitus really sympathise with the brave barbarians, or was he only setting up a 'noble savage' for propaganda purpose? That sympathy with the human condition, rather than any particular ideological presupposition is a first requirement of any historian, and surely the author of Luke-Acts did not lack it! He too had his blind spots - notoriously towards 'the Jews' - but even here his animus lacks the cutting edge which is found, for example, in the fourth gospel.

Having surveyed some views of theologians and historians, let us in conclusion look at the opinions of a literary critic: here is the verdict of F.A.Wright: 'St. Luke, the author of the gospel, which bears his name and also of the Acts of the Apostles, is a writer of a different kind from Mark and Matthew. He is by way of being a professional, and his preface has a distinct literary flavour.... This preface is, perhaps, a concession to the weakness of some wealthy convert, and the rest

of the gospel is written in a much more natural style. But Luke is always an artist,...and like all artists, reveals himself in his book. It is to the poet in him that we owe the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis: the physician is revealed in his intense sympathy with the poor and suffering; the imaginative writer in the wonderful episode of the pilgrims at Emmaus.

In the gospel the nature of his material and the example given by Matthew and Mark more or less fixed the character of Luke's account; but in the Acts he was his own master, and we have a book, which compared with profane histories even in a literary sense holds its own. The narrative, with its mixture of the real and the miraculous, is a very subtle blend of simplicity and art, while the speeches, undoubtedly composed by Luke himself, like that of Peter after Pentecost, that of Stephen before his martyrdom, and above all that of Paul on the Areopagus, serve to sum up a period or a personage as well as does the funeral oration of Pericles!*

The literary critic gives high praise to Acts, and while he offers no detailed estimate of its historical reliability, he clearly regards it as comparable to secular or 'profane' histories. He also observes the unique quality which distinguishes

* A history of Later Greek literature: pp.202-3.

Luke-Acts from other New Testament documents and indeed from early Christian literature as a whole - that the two volume work does indeed attempt to tell the story of the beginnings of Christianity. It is to the credit of Luke, at least, that experts in various disciplines recognise in him a kindred spirit. The literary critic sees in his work 'a mixture of the real and the miraculous....a subtle blend of simplicity and art'. Some historians, on the other hand, are impressed by his accurate range of historical reference, which argues, in their opinion, a close acquaintance with the period it purports to describe. Some contemporary theologians, on the other hand, have come to see in Luke a fellow-theologian of no mean ability. This has been the dominant trend in much recent Lucan study; and so it is to some recent estimates of Luke as a theologian that we will turn next.

Chapter 2.

Was Luke a Second Century Apologist?

We have noted Bishop Wand's comment on recent Lucan study - that 'the third evangelist's reputation as a historian is fast being overtaken by his new renown as a theologian'.* A similar point was made by A.R.C. Leaney, who in a chapter entitled 'New Interpretations: Luke-Acts - a Theological history:**concisely summarising the course of recent critical study, he emphasises the importance of the work of Dibelius and his followers: the effect of which was 'to emphasise the theological character of Luke's writing, suggesting that he wrote to convey a picture of the early church which inevitably reflected the state of affairs when he was writing in about A.D.90'. The works of other critics along the same line of advance, notably Conzelmann and Haenchen, has done much to bring out the theological character of Acts, largely conveyed in the speeches given to authoritative figures such as Peter and Paul, which are generally regarded as Lucan compositions'.***

* The Church Times Oct.16 1970.

** The Pelican guide to modern theology:Vol.3,p.298

*** ibid p.303.

This change of emphasis can be illustrated by comparing the change in titles of books on the subject: It is a long way from 'Luke the Physician' by A.von Harnack, to 'St.Luke the Theologian of Redemptive History', by Helmut Flender. A title like 'The Theology of Acts (J.O.O'Neill) would have seemed odd to the generation of Sir William Ramsay, and 'The Theology of St.Luke (H.Conzelmann) contrasts strangely with even a fairly recent work like 'The Book of Acts in History', which Henry J.Cadbury brought out in 1951.

The rapid growth in Luke's theological reputation is certainly of great interest. Nobody had ever doubted that he had some religious or theological ideas, and H.J.Cadbury had included a chapter on 'Theological Attitudes' on 'The making of Luke-Acts', first published in 1927. This section, however, came as the last of four chapters which discussed 'The personality of the author': the others being 'Language and style', 'Some secular interests', and 'Social and religious attitudes'. Contrast the approach of Cadbury with that of Conzelmann, who declares: 'our aim is to elucidate Luke's work in its present form, not to enquire into possible sources or into the historical facts which provide the material ...our aim is not to investigate the models or sources' (used by Luke) 'as such, nor is it to reconstruct the

historical events. This is of course an indispensable task, but first of all the meaning of the text before us must be investigated regardless of our idea of the probable course of historical events - regardless, that is, of the picture which Luke gives of the latter.'*

It is interesting to note the rise of eminence of Luke the theologian, which has been accompanied by some decline in the fortunes of Luke the historian, and considerable loss of faith in his identity with Luke the Beloved Physician, has taken place in an era of scepticism about Christian origins in general. It runs parallel to the apparent failure of the nineteenth and early twentieth century quest for the historical Jesus. The Jesus of History, as presented by a scholar like T.R.Glover, was very much the Lucan Jesus, and Luke the companion of Paul, as pictured in popular writing of the early post-Harnack period, was not unlike a scholar of the school of T.R.Glover. And why not? it is precisely our contention that theological study and interpretation of Luke-Acts has been carried to extremes, and that a balance must be recovered between the Luke of eschatology and dark sayings, and the Luke of humanitarian and social

* T.S.L. p. 12-13

interests. It has already been noted that the shift in interest in Lucan studies runs side by side with a similar shift of interest in Luke's master.

Again one wonders whether recent interpreters of Luke are not making a theological virtue out of a historical necessity? Since the attempt to penetrate behind the gospels to the historical Jesus has failed, can we do better than to interpret the gospels as they stand, using them as theological pamphlets which witness to the faith of the earliest Christians?

Attribution of subconscious motivation, however, is no substitute for careful analysis of a writer's work! Before this is attempted, however, let us make a preliminary observation: none of the recent 'theological' interpreters of Luke seems to accept the tradition that he was a companion of Paul.* The

* A post-apostolic Luke could still have been a companion of Paul. If he was born in A.D. 25 he would have been a young idealist of 26 when Gallio became proconsul of Achaia. In 59 A.D. he could have gone to Rome with Paul, at the age of 34, and lived on until the end of the century. Church history knows numerous revivalists who were compelled to adapt to a second generation situation. Many a Methodist who knew John Wesley also saw the reign of Jabez Bunting.

The tradition is explicitly rejected by Haenchen in his commentary, and is not discussed by Conzelmann in 'The Theology of St. Luke'.* So too Flender does not discuss the early church tradition about the 'Beloved Physician' but begins at once to 'elucidate structures of Lucan theology, which have theological validity beyond the temporally conditioned situation of the time'**. Flender's Luke is clearly 'a man of the post-apostolic period, which corresponds much more closely to our own today than does the apostolic age (Paul) with its immediate expectation of the Lord'. Flender also quotes the dictum of Bullmann - that Luke 'has abandoned the originally kerygmatic meaning of the Jesus tradition and has 'historicised' it.'**

* See Conzelmann in HNT, p.6. 'So bleibt das Rätsel des Wir-Berichtes nach wie vor ungelöst. Sicher ist nur, dass durch das 'Wir' der Eindruck der Augenzeugenschaft Erweckt werden soll'.

** Flender, op.cit p. . 'Strukturen der lukanischen Theologie herauszuarbeiten, die über die damalige zeitgeschichtlich bedingte Situation hinaus theologische Verbindlichkeit haben'.** 'den ursprünglichen kerygmatischen Sinn der Jesus-Überlieferung preisgegeben und sie historisiert hat'.

Less austere theological and more traditional is the approach of J.C.O'Neill. He too is clear, however, that no personal friend of Paul wrote Acts. Indeed the author was a contemporary and kindred spirit to Justin Martyr and wrote in the second century. He was in fact an apologist: 'Luke was writing a history for the general reading public in order to convert them to Christianity'.

In order to bring Luke into line with Justin, O'Neill has to date Justin rather early in the second century. But is O'Neill's second century date, on which his whole argument turns, justified by the evidence? Could not 'a history for the general reading public...(written) in order to convert them to Christianity, 'have been produced even in the Flavian period?' Is it not possible that some rethinking and re-presentation of the faith was done in the relative calm that followed the fall of Nero?

Was Luke a contemporary of Justin Martyr?

The heart of O'Neill's argument is clearly stated thus: 'The attempt will be made..to date Acts by discovering positive theological parallels between Luke-Acts and other early Christian writers. It depends on the presupposition that if it can be shown that two

writers shared a whole range of presuppositions and were concerned about many of the same questions, then we may conclude that they belonged to the same generation, provided that they did not employ each other's writings. If this assumption is accepted, the discovery of close kinship between Luke-Acts and some other theologian's* work, without literary dependence, will enable us to suggest the period in which Luke-Acts was composed'.**

To this statement of principle it is essential to add one rider; 'provided that we can rebut any other evidence which might point to a different date'. For in fact O'Neill does not rebut any such evidence and makes no attempt to refute the arguments for an early date put forward by Sherwin-White. These are simply ignored. O'Neill goes on to argue that 'the first writer, apart from Luke, to assume that the world mission of the apostles should be told in the same breath as the history of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension is Justin Martyr'.* There are indeed parallels in 1 Clement, who holds up Peter and Paul as shining examples to his own generation; both these

* Some other 'theologian' - indeed!

** O'Neill p.5.

*** O'Neill p.10.

heroic figures suffered because of jealousy, made their witness and were martyred in Rome. The theme of persecution by the Jews is common to both 1 Clement and Acts, but wonderful results flowed from this 'jealousy'. 'Luke simply ignores Peter's fate, though he must have been aware of the circumstances of his martyrdom, and puts all the emphasis on Paul's arrival in Rome. He would agree with Clement that Paul's universal preaching, (cf Acts 19;10;28;28) his arrival in Rome to be martyred, and his witness to the rulers (cf 9;15 and passim) were the most important features of his life. As Clement never quotes or alludes to Acts in his epistle, these affinities may be important for dating Acts.'

The next parallel to Acts which O'Neill perceives is found in the Pastoral epistles. 'The Pastoral epistles...share with Luke-Acts something of the same atmosphere (for instance in the use of eschatology to inculcate a morality of steadfastness and temperance, in emphasising the importance of being in good standing with rulers...Paul is again pictured as the model of perseverance and endurance (2 Tim 3:10-12) and his arrival at Rome to defend himself before the Roman authorities, marks in some sense, the completion of his preaching to the Gentiles. 'However, it is unlikely that the 'Pastor' knew and used Luke-Acts. He did, however, know and use the Pauline collection of letters



of which Luke was apparently ignorant'. All that may be concluded concerning the date of Acts from the theological affinity between the two books is that Luke-Acts can hardly have been written long before the Pauline collection was published (if that is the right way to describe what happened,*since it has in common with the Pastorals, which were written after that publication, both a general theological point of view and an estimation of the significance of Luke's work.**

O'Neill proceeds to argue that 'Clement, Luke and the author of the pastorals agree in assuming a certain significance in the history of salvation for Paul's martyrdom in Rome. But neither Clement nor the Pastor did what Luke has done, and made the story of Paul an integral part of the central event - the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ...'The first writer to do this was Justin, who declared, 'After his crucifixion even all his friends deserted and denied him...but later when he rose from the dead and appeared

* Surely it is not! The work of H.I.Marrou on the letters of Augustine shows that the ancient world was not familiar with the idea of the simultaneous release of a large number of copies onto the market.Permission was rather given to borrow,copy and return, a'master-copy'. (Vigil ae Christianae: 3:1949-p.208).

** Which are taken to be non-Pauline.The 'fragment theory' is dismissed in a footnote.

to them, he taught them to read all the prophecies in which all these things which had happened were foretold. They saw him return to heaven, and believed, and when they had received power which he sent from heaven to them, they went to every nation of men and taught these things and were called apostles.'

According to O'Neill, Luke agrees with Justin on six points: 'First...that the chief business of the risen Messiah was to persuade the Apostles that his suffering was foretold...Second, they both greatly elaborate and illustrate the primitive statement that all that had happened was 'according to the scriptures'. 'Third, they both state that during the resurrection discussion Jesus referred back to his own predictions of suffering. Fourth, both explicitly record Jesus' ascension. Fifth, both state that after the ascension the apostles received power from above. Sixth, in both it is said that the apostles went out into all the world to teach what Jesus had persuaded them was true'. 'None of these points, taken singly, 'says O'Neill, 'is exactly paralleled elsewhere in the New Testament'.

Having thus noted six theological agreements between Luke and Justin, O'Neill proceeds to distinguish six more coincidences in detail between Justin's work and Acts: First, Justin argues from a Psalm of David to Jesus in the same way as Peter argues at Pentecost.

(Acts 2:25-32) compare Apol 35:5-6) Second, both note that the apostles were 'idiōtai.' (Acts 4:13 and Apol. 39:3). Third, 'both employ the common idea, probably going back to Socrates: 'It is necessary to obey God rather than men'. (Acts 5:29-Dial 80;3) Fourth, in Justin and in Acts (and in Ignatius) we find it explicitly stated that Jesus 'both ate and drank' with his disciples after his resurrection'. (Acts 10:41-Dial 51:2. Ignatius ad Smyrn 3:3)

Fifthly, Justin provides a clue to the riddle of the unknown God in Acts 17:23. 'It is doubtful whether there was an actual inscription in Athens in the singular, but whatever the historical facts, the widespread literary tradition was that there was an altar in Athens dedicated to the 'Unknown God'.

Justin quoted Plato's report of Socrates, who exhorted the Athenians to turn', 'πρὸς Θεοῦ δὲ τοῦ ἀγνώστου αὐτοῖς διὰ λόγου ἑστηκός 2 Apol 10:8.

Lastly, in the Dialogue with Trypho (39:4) 'there appears a similar dramatic device to the one used in the scene before Agrippa: Justin tells Trypho 'Listen my friend, I am not mad or beside myself,' before continuing his argument'.

It would appear that the six points of contact alleged by O'Neill are by no means as close as he maintains, To take them in the reverse order: I am not

mad' motif occurs in Philo, where the writer begins his denunciation of Flaccus by recounting his good administration in the early part of his governorship. 'Perhaps someone will say...are you out of your sense or mad? I am not mad, my dear sir, nor am I a simpleton ...I am praising Flaccus...in order to present his villainy more conspicuously'.*

One might as well argue that the 'Are you mad?' motif indicates an early first-century date for Acts! However, it would appear to be a figure common in diatribe, and no doubt frequent enough in the speech of everyday life as well.

Nor does it seem that the point about the 'Unknown God' can prove anything about Acts. There is evidence to show that altars to 'Unknown Gods' (*θεοῖς ἀγνώστοις*) existed at Olympia and elsewhere. The dedication in Acts is certainly in the singular, but Lake writes 'the singular may have been used in the formula' *τῷ προσκυνῶντι θεῷ* ' meaning 'to the Unknown God who is' concerned

* In Flacc. 6 - 7 ἴσως δ' ἂν τις εἴπῃ... Μὴ ἄρα παραπαίεις καὶ μέμνηται; οὐ μέμνηται, ὡς οὐτως οὐδ' ἡλίθιος τίς ἐμὲ... ἐπαινῶ τὸν Φλάκκον... ἵνα αὐτοῦ τὴν μοχθηρίαν ὡρῇ δηλοτέραν παραστήσω.

** Beg.V.p.240-246.

in the matter': 'Ἀγνωστικὸν θεῶν' would be a loose but not very inaccurate paraphrase.' Nothing is proved by saying that 'both Luke and Justin appeal to an Athenian belief in the 'Unknown God', when a similar belief is reported in Pausanias, Diogenes Laertius, and Philostratus.*

O'Neill's fourth argument is that Justin, Acts and Ignatius all state that Jesus both 'ate and drank' with his disciples after the resurrection. The reference in Justin is to Dial.51, where Justin offers for Trypho's benefit a concise account of John the Baptist's prophecies of Jesus, including the statement that Jesus would 'eat and drink with his disciples'. Ignatius also tells the Smyrnaeans(33): that Jesus 'after his resurrection...ate and drank with them as a being of flesh, although he was united in spirit to the father.' Similarly Peter declares in Acts 10;41, that he and other disciples 'ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead'.

In Ignatius the anti-docetic attitude is quite explicit. Like the author of 3 John, he tells his readers that they should avoid even meeting the 'beasts in the form of men' who say that Christ suffered only in semblance.**

* Beg.V.p. 240-246.

** Smyrn 4.

Now anti-docetic motives seem to underly the story of the Lord's eating fish at Luke 24;40. They may well also be present in the quotation from Acts 10:41 and also in the quotation from Justin. But unfortunately we know too little about the church's early history to say with certainty when and where docetic or gnostic views prevailed. Paul had already found it necessary to make to the Corinthians, though less intemperately, the same point that Ignatius made to the Smyrnaeans: if there is no resurrection, then 'we are of all men most to be pitied'.

Surely nothing precise about the date of Acts can be deducted from this alleged parallel between Acts and Justin! If the docetic movement is thought to appear at the end of the first century, then such a date might be thought possible for the Lucan writings: although Luke does not find it necessary to launch a heavy attack on docetism. Nor does he display the anxieties of Ignatius and the author of the Johannine letters. He feels secure enough in his own position to state it simply.

Neither can anything be deduced from the statement; 'We ought to obey God rather than man' (Acts 5;29) which is also found in Justin (Dial.80;3), as well as in 1 and 2 Clement. The idea is a commonplace one which goes back at least as far as Plato (Apol 29D). The thought if not the wording, is that of the Hebrew boys when

faced with the fiery furnace. (Dan 3:16-18).

A much closer coincidence is provided by the statement that the apostles were uneducated (ἰδιῶται Acts 4:13): Justin writes 'For from Jerusalem there went out into the world twelve in number, and these illiterate (ἰδιῶται) and of no ability in speaking'.

According to Lampe's Patristic Greek Lexicon the apostles are also called 'idiōtai' in 2 Apol. 10;8 - the passage in which Socrates refers to 'Unknown Gods'. The word also occurs in Athenagoras 'among us you will find 'idiōtai' and artisans and old women'; it then turns up also in Clement and Origen. Again nothing can be proved by such an argument as this. If Justin and his successors knew and used Acts, then the verbal echo needs no explaining.

The same applies to O'Neill's first and strongest point: In Peter's Pentecost address we read: 'For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me...etc.' This is a quotation from Psalm 16;8-11, and Peter concludes: 'I may say to you confidently of the Patriarch David that he both died and was buried...'therefore the psalm is to be applied to the Christ.

Justin declares: 'And indeed David the King and prophet who uttered these things suffered none of them; but Jesus Christ stretched forth his hands, being

crucified by the Jews speaking against him and denying that he was the Christ'. (Apol.35:5)

However, even here the parallel is slender enough, and becomes almost unrecognisable when it is seen that Justin is not quoting Psalm 16 but Psalm 22;16. ('for my vesture they cast lots') What is more, the application of Davidic psalms to Jesus was an early Christian commonplace.

Thus the six coincidences turn out to be slight indeed, but the six theological agreements seem to be a little stronger. Luke and Justin certainly share a common apologetic purpose. Yet of the three passages referred to by O'Neill (Apol;50;12- Dial.53:5, Dial 106:1) only the first offers a really close parallel to Luke-Acts. There is also the reference to Bethphage (Dial.53:5) at the start of the triumphal entry, and the passage in Dial.106:1; which is part of a long exegesis of Psalm 22 that begins at ch.98- seems nothing to the purpose. Most extraordinary is that nowhere does O'Neill, in his attempt to prove that Justin did not use Luke's gospel, refer to the statement of

Justin himself: *Οἱ γὰρ ἀπόστολοι ἐν ταῖς γενομέναις ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀπομνημονεύμασιν, ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια, οὕτως παρέδωκαν ἐπετάλῃσθαι αὐτοῖς.* Apol.66:1

Again, what do we suppose Trypho to have read, when he objected to Justin that an impossible ethical

ideal could not be relevant? 'I am aware that your precepts in the so-called gospel are so wonderful and great that I suspect that none can keep them, for I have carefully read them'.

All this presupposes the existence of written gospels regarded as authoritative. It is incorrect to say that 'the case for literary dependence rests on an examination of Apol.50;12'. It rests also on the words of Justin himself. If the 'memoirs which are called gospels' were not at least the three synoptics in some form or other, then what did they consist of? Justin's position was summarised by Hans Lietzmann thus: 'The process by which the gospels became canonical may be clearly observed in its preliminary stages in Justin, shortly after 150 A.D., and it was completed at the time of Irenaeus - i.e. a generation later.' And to Irenaeus the four gospels were as self-evident as the four winds or the four points of the compass.

There has certainly been much critical debate about the form of the gospel quotations found in Justin. Semisch suggested, in 1848, that he relied on his own inaccurate memory. Bousset considered that he used 'Q'. In a convenient presentation of the data, William Sanday listed various features in Justin's writings which repeat statements found in Matthew,

Mark and Luke.* Mark is little represented, as most of his material is repeated by the other two synoptics, except for the statement that Jesus was a carpenter and that James and John were called Boanerges - the 'sons of thunder' (Mk.3;17). On this Sanday commented: 'If such be the outline of Justin's gospel, it appears to be really a question of small importance whether or not he made use of our present gospels in their present form. If he did not use the gospels he used documents which contained substantially the same matter'. Sanday inclined to the view that Justin used a gospel harmony, but pointed out that if this was so, the synoptics came first, the harmony second and Justin third. 'In order to reach the state in which it is found in Justin, the road lies through our gospels and not outside them.' Sanday was prepared to grant that Justin knew and occasionally quoted from non-canonical gospels, as in the statement that at the baptism 'a fire was kindled on the Jordan', but basically - and a study of Justin's writings confirms this - the first apologist was a synoptic man.

In order to escape the conclusion that Justin used Luke's gospel, if not directly then at one remove,

* The Gospels in the Second Century - published as a reply to 'Supernatural Religion', in 1878.

O'Neill is obliged to argue that Luke and Justin both used a common source, and shared a number of unwritten traditions. To support this the sayings of Jesus are set out, as Justin quotes them, in a series of tables: from these O'Neill seeks to show that where Justin is not following Matthew, he depends, not on Luke, but on a special source. These refer in particular to Chapters 15-17 of the first apology, where Justin decides to 'cite a few precepts given by Christ himself'.

Thus for example

Matt. 16;26	Apol. 15;12	Luke 9;25.
τί γὰρ ὠφελεῖσθαι ἄνθρωπος ἐάν τ. κόσμον ὅλον κερδῇ τ. δὲ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ	τί γὰρ ὠφελεῖται ἄνθρωπος ἂν τ. κόσμον ὅλον κερδῇ τ. δὲ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπολέσῃ	τί γὰρ ὠφελεῖται ἄνθρωπος κερδῶν τ. κόσμον ὅλον ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἀπολέσας ἢ ὧς σωθῆναι
ὧς σωθῆναι ἢ τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τ. ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ	ἢ τί δώσει αὐτοῦ ἀντάλλαγμα;	

On this O'Neill writes: 'Justin's wording follows Matthew exactly, except at one point. He used the

word ἀπολλύμε for Matthew's σήπτω while Luke uses both verbs. The alternatives are either that Justin, using Matthew, decided to avoid Matthew's verb here in favour of Luke's verbs, or that Luke has harmonised with the independent form of the saying preserved in Justin.'

On this H.F.D. Sparks commented: 'What Mr. O'Neill omits to mention is that St. Luke at this point is rewriting Mark, as also is St. Matthew, that in the previous verse in Mark ἀπολλύμε is used in conjunction with ψυχῇ twice, and that both these usages are reproduced verbatim in both Matthew and Luke - quite apart from the identical usages of ἀπολλύμε with ψυχῇ at Matthew 10:39 and Luke 17:33 (Q). The number of possible explanations of Justin's ἀπολέσθαι is consequently very great, and to reduce them to two is an unwarrantable oversimplification!'

The fact that Justin quotes the sayings of Jesus loosely, or from an extracanonical version, cannot of itself prove that he did not know Luke's gospel, and as is pointed out by Sparks, it comes up against the great difficulty of Justin's two references to the Annunciation.

* JTS 14 1963; pp 454 - 466.

Dial 100.1647: πίστιν δὲ καὶ χάριν λαβοῦσα Μαρία
ἡ παρθένος, εὐαγγελιζομένου αὐτῇ Γαβριὴλ
αγγέλου ὅτι πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' αὐτὴν
ἐπελεύσεται καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει
αὐτήν, διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἐξ αὐτῆς
ἁγίου ἔστιν υἱὸς θεοῦ, ἀπεκρίνατο·
Γένυστό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου.

On this Sparks remarks 'that it presupposes a knowledge, if not of Luke, then of something very like Luke', as does the passage. 1 Apol;33;4-5.

'The power of God having come upon the virgin overshadowed her, and caused her while yet a virgin to conceive. And the angel of God who was sent to the same virgin at that time brought her good news saying: 'Behold thou shalt conceive of the Holy Ghost and bear a son, and he shall be called the son of the highest, for he shall save his people from their sins.'

Sparks might well have quoted the very next words of Justin: ^{ὡς οἱ ἀπομνημονεύσαντες πάντα τὰ περὶ} ὡς οἱ ἀπομνημονεύσαντες πάντα τὰ περὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν... ἐδίδασκεν, οἷς ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἐπειδὴ καὶ δεῖ Ἡσαίου τοῦ προδεδηλομένου τὸ προφητικὸν πνεῦμα τοῦτον γενησόμενον ὡς προεμνηύομεν εἶπῃ.

Justin here speaks onemore of those who made 'memoirs' - 'apomnemoneumata' - of the gospel stories - which he regards as sufficiently authoritative to quote

in the same breath as the beloved Old Testament prophets to whose utterances he gave so much weight. One of these authoritative memoirs contained the story of the annunciation in a form virtually identical to that which appears in Luke's gospel. The natural assumption is that in fact it was Luke's gospel. Certainly the onus of proof is on anyone who wishes to prove the contrary, and the linguistic parallels set out by O'Neill are far too ambiguous to do any such thing.

Sparks lists other parallels between Luke and Justin: They both record the last word of Jesus: 'Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.' - and Justin adds once again - 'as I have learned from the memoirs'

(ἐκ τῶν ἀπομνημονευμάτων)*. The same revealing phrase occurs in Dial.106;1; Psalm 22, says Justin makes it clear that he stood in the midst of his brethren the apostles, who repented of their flight from him when he was crucified, after he rose from the dead, and after they were persuaded by himself, that before this passion he had mentioned to them that he must suffer these things, and that they were announced beforehand by the prophets, and when living with them sang praises to God, as is made evident in the memoirs of the apostles' (ὡς καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπομνημονεύμασι τοῦ ἀποστόλου δηλοῦται γεγενημένον)

* Dial.105;12.

Once again Justin appeals to authoritative written tradition about Jesus, worthy to be cited along with Old Testament scripture. 'Memoirs' is his word for 'gospels', and if he was using some otherwise unknown source, accepted by the early church, then what has become of it? O'Neill's theory is a case of 'obscurum per obscurius'.

These references, together with others listed by Sparks, make it infinitely more probable that Justin knew Luke in some form or other. If he had studied as carefully as he claims, he could have read all three synoptics and used a harmony for personal reference. His own writings show that Justin was a keen if not always careful, scholar and exegete.*

* But did Justin know the Fourth Gospel? Two quotations suggest that he did. One is the reply of the Baptist:

Οὐκ εἶμι ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ φωνὴ βοῶντος

(Dial 88) which seems to be an echo of John 1;19;20;23.

The other is Apol.1.61. καὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπεν·
 Ἄν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῇτε, οὐ μὴ εἰσελθῇτε εἰς τὴν
 βασιλείαν τῶν θεῶν. Οὐαὶ δὲ καὶ ἡδύνατον εἰς
 τὰς μητέρας τῶν τεκνῶν τοὺς ἀπ' αὐτῶν γεννημένους
 ἐμβῆναι, φανερόν πασίν ἐστίν.

Sanday observed(p.234)that this was a clear,if periphrastic reference to the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3; while further consideration of Justin's Logos doctrine led Sanday to conclude that he did in fact know the Fourth Gospel.

This makes it more likely than ever that Apol. 50;12, is a reference to Acts. Such is the view of Haenchen, who writes:

'(a) The statement in Apol.1;39;3 that the twelve apostles were ἰδῶται, ἀλλὰ μὴ συνάμενοι strongly recalls Acts 4;13 ἑβραῖοι ἑλληνισταὶ καὶ ἰδῶται . But by itself this reference would not be decisive.

(b) In the same way it seems that 1 Apol. 1;49;5 (the gentiles who hear the gospel are said to be filled with joy) echoes Acts 13;48- 'When the gentiles heard this they rejoiced')

(c) The decisive passage is 1 Apol. 50;12. In the account of the passion narrative, the substance of Luke 23;49 is quoted, and in the continuation of the story there is a clear quotation of Luke 24;44f; finally the ascension and the gift of the spirit are reported with a verbal echo of Acts;1;8'.*

O'Neill denies this and argues: 'First Luke 23;49 apart from the fact that it uses ἡσταντοί and not γυναικες for Jesus' followers, does not say or imply that the disciples deserted him as Justin does. Second, the only pair of words common to Luke-Acts and Justin in this passage is συνέμεν λαβόντες . In Acts these words are spoken by Jesus, and it is incredible that Justin

* H. p.7.

should reproduce as his own comment, words which were attributed to the Lord in his source. Finally it is surprising, if Justin knew Acts 2, that he neglected to say that the 'power' was the power of the Holy Spirit. There is no evidence that Justin cited Acts or knew of its existence.*

It would seem we are in danger of not seeing the wood for the trees; any decision about Justin's use of the present canonical writings must be based on an overall impression of his work. In 1 Apol.50 it certainly looks as if we have an echo of the Emmaus incident: ('he taught them to read the prophecies in which all these things were foretold as coming to pass') as well as the ascension story. ('When they had seen him ascending into heaven and had believed and had received power sent thence from him upon them, they taught these things and were called 'Apostles'). The points made by O'Neill about what is 'surprising' or 'incredible' are simply subjective, and the use of *γνωστοί* for *γνωριμοί* proves nothing. There is here a strong a priori probability that Justin knew Luke-Acts, and it is made certain by Justin's quoting the annunciation story (Ap.33;5) as coming from the authoritative apostolic 'apomnemoneumata'. The fact

* O'Neill p.15-16.

is that Justin's main interest is in his beloved argument from prophecy, which by his own account played a major part in his conversion to Christianity.*

Now if O'Neill has failed to prove that Justin did not use Luke-Acts, what happens to the argument for a second century Luke? Surprisingly enough, O'Neill puts forward no other evidence at all! He is indeed willing to bring Justin forward to A.D. 138-9, in order to make him a contemporary of Luke, who he believes, wrote at some time between A.D. 115 and 170, but no argument is put forward for this late dating except the apparently fallacious one of theological similarities (p.53 above). Against these alleged similarities one must set numerous dissimilarities.

1) The writings of Justin Martyr are quite different in form from those of Luke. The latter wrote what purports to be, and indeed looks like, an orderly

* Dial 8;2. 'But straightway a flame was kindled in my soul, and a love of the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ, possessed me'. Significantly, he links the prophets with the words of Christ, which 'possess a terrible power in themselves, and are sufficient to inspire those who turn aside from the paths of rectitude with awe'.

historical account. His declared intention was ' *ἀνατολὰς καὶ δύσεως* '.* Justin on the other hand composed apologetical works as such. He sets out explicitly to refute false charges against the Christians and to show that they are loyal and peaceable citizens. He vehemently rebuts the charge of atheism. His method is to look for analogies - positive and negative - in classical and pagan mythology. Christ was partially known even by Socrates,** but as for the Christian eucharist 'the wicked devils have imitated (it) in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done!*** The apologetic points made by Justin could have been relevant at any time from Claudius to Constantine, and the precise grounds for dating Justin are not theological but historical. He addresses the Emperor Antoninus Pius (1.Ap.1;1) and refers to the heretic Marcion as still living (1.Ap.26;3).

* We do not deny all apologetic motives to Luke the historian. His positive attitude to Rome is a clear one. What we assert here is that the form of Luke's work differs widely from that of Justin's.

** 2. Apol. 10.

*** Paul made a similar point - what the pagans sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God (1 Cor.10;20) - which is no reason to regard him as a contemporary of Justin Martyr.

He also mentions the recent revolt of the Jews under Bar Kochba (1.Ap.31;6).*

Again, Justin spends much time and ingenuity on the argument from prophecy and attached great weight to it. Much of his dialogue with Trypho consists of learned exegesis of scripture. Luke-Acts does indeed assume that the whole story of redemption took place 'according to the scriptures', but so did Paul and the Christian movement as a whole. Nor is there any explicit pleading in Luke-Acts against the popular charges of incest and cannibalism: nothing about τὸ

δυσφῆμα ἐκείνα μεθ' ἡμῶν γινώσκοντες ἔργα .

One point in favour of Justin is that he finds it possible, even after the 'atrocities' of Bar Kochba, to carry on a dialogue of some sort with the Jews, which while polemical in form, is outwardly polite, though indeed Justin, like Dr. Johnson, 'took care that the Whig dogs did not get the best of it.'

Much of this could perhaps be due to Justin's Samaritan background, but even more to his own eirenic personality: and surely it is here, rather than in any close conjunction of date, that the parallel with the writer to Theophilus is to be found. Justin is prepared to admit that Christians who observe the law may be saved, so long as they do not try to impose

* ἐν τῷ νῦν γεγενημένῳ αὐτοῦδαΐκῳ πολέμῳ
βαρχωχέβας.

their principles on other Gentiles (Dial 47), though he concedes that some of his co-religionists deny this. He is aware of Hebrew Christianity: 'Some,* through weak-mindedness, wish to observe such customs as were given by Moses' - but for him they are a dwindling old guard of misguided people. The Jewish Christians who appear in Justin's writings are a long way from the 'Many thousands among the Jews of those who have believed' who confronted Paul in Jerusalem (Acts 21;20).

Thus the theological parallels between Luke and Justin, perceived by O'Neill, are far from convincing. Moreover, Justin has other theological interests which are lacking in Luke: most notable is his doctrine of the Logos: 'We have been taught that Christ is the first-born of God, and we have declared that he is the Word of whom every race of men were partakers: and those who have lived *μετὰ λόγου* are Christians-as among the Greeks, Socrates and Heraclitus..' (1 Ap. 46:7-8). The ancient stoics and poets and historians' *ἕκαστος γάρ τις ἀπὸ μέρους τοῦ σπερματικοῦ θεοῦ λόγου τὸ συγγενὲς ὄντων καθὼς ἐφθέρξατο* (2 Ap.13)

Luke-Acts shows no sign of any Logos doctrine, nor does it engage in theological argument as such,

* 1 Ap. 26:8.

whereas Justin carries on theological debate on

two fronts, against Jew and Greek as well; 'Ἐνταῦθα

γὰρ παλὴν ἡμῶν καταφαίνονται, δευτέραν
χώραν μετὰ τοῦ Ἀτρεπτοῦ καὶ ἄλλ' ὅντα θεῶν
καὶ γεννήτορα τῶν Ἀπάντων ἀνθρώπων σταυρωθέντι
διδόναί ἡμᾶς ἔχοντες, ἀγνοοῦντες τὸ ἐν
τούτῳ μυστήριον

1 Ap. 13:7-8 *

It seems therefore that the similarities between Luke and Justin do not exceed the dissimilarities, and that O'Neill's attempt to date Luke-Acts in the second century does not succeed. H.F.D. Sparks commented: 'Mr. O'Neill clearly does not think it a side-issue, for he devotes nearly a third of his own space to the question of date...It is therefore all the more necessary to examine carefully the critical framework... within which... treatment of the theology is set... otherwise the recognition of their merits in one field will only promote a general atmosphere of uncertainty in the other...Mr.O'Neill has (not) in fact advanced a single argument for making a second century date

* This passage illustrates the difficulty of trying to date passages on grounds of theological resemblance : the word Ἀτρεπτος foreshadows the age of Arius, while the reference to the mystery not understood recalls Paul's words in 1 Cor. 2:6-10.

for Luke-Acts any more acceptable now than it was a hundred years ago.'*

O'Neill's argument seems circular. Analysis of Luke's theology is used to indicate a late date for his work, and this late dating is then used in turn to analyse his theology. 'We have used' claims O'Neill 'a preliminary analysis of Luke's theology to help

* JTS Vol.14 p.466. O'Neill in the second edition of his book does not appear to answer Sparks' argument about Justin's references to the annunciation, (Apol. 23:4-5 and Dial.5) which seems decisive. He does deal with the argument that the D text of Acts was interpolated by an anti-Judaic scribe in the middle of the second century, and that the original of Acts was therefore much earlier. (E.J.Epp - The Theological tendencies of the Codex Bezae Cantabrigie sis in Acts', and also R.P.C.Hanson The Ideology of Codex Bezae in Acts: NTS,14,p.282-6). O'Neill concludes that 'the results of study of the question do not rule out the hypothesis that Acts was published early in the second century'. Maybe not, but they do nothing to confirm the theory that 'The terminus a quo for Luke-Acts is about A.D.115 and the terminus ad quem is about A.D.130.'

fix the date of the composition of his writings. Our conclusion must be tested by further discussion of the theology, and by comparing it with the writings of those who, we now have reason to believe, were Luke's contemporaries'.

But if the attempt to link Luke with Justin has failed, what then happens to the rest of the analysis of the theology? We have noted that earlier generations did not think of writing books entitled 'The theology of St. Luke' or 'The theology of Acts'. Luke did not after all compose theological works in the formal sense at all. He left, so far as we know, neither a Church Dogmatics nor a childrens' catechism. Unlike Justin, he has no Apology or Dialogue attributed to him. Nor did he leave behind him pastoral letters containing theological or ethical instruction, like Paul, Ignatius, or Clement of Rome. His two volume work is in the form of a narrative, a record of events which are alleged to have happened, however incompetent or inaccurate. If Luke had been a theologian first and foremost, he might have been expected to express himself, in the composition of more explicitly

theological works.*

* It is of course much debated whether, when Luke promised Theophilus an 'orderly account' he had in mind theological or historical order. But in form at least his order is historical and chronological - even if wrong. Why else does he refer to Quirinius - (Lk. 2:1) the fifteenth year of Tiberius (3:1), the famine 'under Claudius' (Acts 11:28) and Gallio's proconsulship (18:12)? Harnack claimed that 'the names are mentioned in the natural course of the narrative: there is nothing intentionally chronological', but added, 'such a passage as Lk. 3:1, where the chronological situation is scientifically determined, is to be found nowhere in the Acts of the Apostles' (A.A.p. 5-6) But is it not precisely the detailed synchronism of Lk. 3:1 that sets the time scale for all the rest? Luke was not obsessed with dates - indeed he may have got them wrong, but the names of Claudius and Gallio are mentioned 'in the natural course of the narrative' precisely because Luke was interested in linking his story with the wider contemporary world. We do not wish to discredit the enterprise of redaction-criticism. Marxsen has noted (Mark the Evangelist p. 25) that the βίβλος in Matt 1:1 and the δῆγμα of Luke 1:1 correspond to the εὐαγγέλιον in Mark 1:1. We plead only that students should not lose their way through the wider historical wood by concentrating too exclusively on the theological trees.

Thus Cadbury, writing 'The making of Luke-Acts', studied the religious and theological attitudes of the author after secular and social ones. 'Theological attitudes' occupied 25 pages, while 'social and religious attitudes' received twenty pages and 'secular interests' six. The largest share of Cadbury's space went to 'Language and style' which was allotted 26 pages.

One wonders whether this shift of interest from the more secular, social and human side of the Lucan writings is not really a symptom of a profounder change in attitudes which could be paralleled on other fields of religious and secular writing. Each age tends to find its own values mirrored in the classical works of bygone times: the value of Cadbury's work is that he holds a balance between secular and theological interests with the same delicacy as did - we think - the author to Theophilus himself.

'At a late hour yesterday the sixth, while a festival was taking place at Sarepta, and the clapper players were giving their usual performance at the house of Plution, my son in law.. his slave Epaphroditus, aged about eight years, wishing to lean over the roof to watch the said clapper players, fell and was killed'.

On this incident from the papyri Cadbury comments;

'Unfortunately, Epaphroditus at Sarepta had not, like Eutychus at Troas - whose very name means 'Lucky' - a wonder-worker to bring him to life'. We may compare rather an inscription about another mishap in the fourth century B.C., at Epidaurus in Greece at the shrine of Aesculapius, the God of healing: 'When the suppliants were already asleep in the temple, Aeschines climbing a tree peered into the sacred yard. So falling down from the tree on the pickets of the fence he spiked his eyes. But being in a sorry plight and having become blind he supplicated the God and slept in the temple and became well.'*

This balanced all-round interest in the Lucan writings has certainly given place in recent years to a strong, if not exclusive, emphasis on Lucan theology. Thus Conzelmann has said that his purpose is 'not to reconstruct the historical events. This is of course an indispensable task, but first of all the meaning of the text before us must be investigated regardless of our idea of the probable course of the historical events - regardless, that is, of the picture which Luke gives of the latter.' **

* The Book of Acts in History: p. 8-9.

** TSL p.12-13: This is what H.F.D.Sparks has called Conzelmann's 'self-denying ordinance.'

O'Neill is of course aware, that Luke-Acts is not a treatise in dogmatics: 'It has been agreed that the theology of Acts consists, not so much in the doctrines, which are put into the mouths of the chief historical characters, as in the movement of the history. God was leading the Church to understand his will in its historical experience, as it was driven out of Jerusalem and towards Rome...This theology is not a propositional theology, but a theology of history which has room for certain divergencies and even disagreements, provided that they all contribute to showing how God's purpose for the church is worked out in the end.'*

'Theology', then, in O'Neill's understanding, means what is often called in modern jargon 'ideology'. It refers to the underlying pre-suppositions about the world and its ways, which can be found in Marxist, Fascist, and secular

* O'Neill p.100.

historians.* Thus, for Luke, Paul about to cross over to Macedonia was the equivalent of Lenin at the Finland Station in 1917.

* And those who point out the presuppositions of others often turn out to be unaware of the implications of their own; thus for example Prof. J.H. Plumb concludes 'The Death of the Past' with a fine peroration: 'The old past is dying: its force weakening, and indeed it should. Indeed the historian should speed it on its way, for it was compounded of bigotry, of national vanity, of class domination. It was as absurd as that narrow Christian interpretation which Gibbon rightly scorned. May history step into its shoes, help to sustain man's confidence in his destiny, and create for us a new past as true, as exact as we can make it: that will help us to achieve our identity, not as Americans or Russians, Chinese or Britons, black or white, rich or poor, but as men'. (The Death of the Past p. 144-145)

But whence did Prof. Plumb derive his metaphysic of the unity of all mankind? Not surely, from the empirical study of history alone. At the end of Prof. Plumb's lectures we find that 'Geschichte' has been transformed into 'Heilsgeschichte'. Why the ecstatic personification (May history step into its shoes...help to sustain man's confidence in his destiny)? For this writer, as for Luke - 'the theology consists..in the movement of the history', and at the close of the book we are confronted by an evangelist as earnest as Dr. Billy Graham. It is indeed poor sport to make fun of a man's confession of faith, provided that he recognises it for what it is. Did not Saul of Tarsus say something similar in Gal. 3:28, and grapple just as desperately as Prof. Plumb with the demons of race, tribe and class conflict?

As already noted, the general historicity of the Luke-Acts narrative is confirmed in outline by the hostile testimony of Tacitus,* and O'Neill considers that Luke has made a serious attempt to describe what actually happened: thus he has schematised his story into five parts, both in the Gospel and in Acts.:

'It is possible to justify a fivefold division of the gospel:

- 1) 1:5-5:38. Jesus comes to fulfill all the O.T. expectations.
- 2) 4:1-9:50. He preaches in the whole of Judaea and Galilee and gathers his disciples.
- 3) 9:51-13:35. He begins his journey to Jerusalem and teaches the nature of discipleship.
- 4) 14:1-19:27. He concludes his journey to Jerusalem and prepares his disciples for the passion.
- 5) 19:28-24:53. He reigns in Jerusalem by dying and rising again'.

O'Neill claims that each of these parts is governed by some sort of geographical factor, and that always the geographical movement has significance for the history of salvation. 'Jerusalem plays a key role in the story. The last temptation takes place there. Jesus steadfastly sets his face to go there at 9:51.

* Ann 15:44.

In the fourth section Jesus enters Jerusalem to die, 'having warned his disciples that Jerusalem cannot be the scene of the Kingdom's coming until it has been the scene of his death'.

'The corresponding fivefold division of Acts is this:

(1) 1;9-8;3 (2) 8;4-11;18 (3) 11;19-15;35 (4) 15;36-19;20 (5) 19;21-28;31'-and O'Neill claims that

Jerusalem plays an equally important part here too:

thus, for example: 'at the beginning of the second

and third sections the Jerusalem church specifically

approves and watches over the new missionary efforts,

by sending Peter and John to Samaria (8:14-25) and by

sending Barnabas to Antioch (11;22)...The final

section begins with Paul's making his fateful decision

to return to Jerusalem and to go from there to Rome...

In the whole of Luke-Acts Jerusalem controls the

history...'*

Now these proposed fivefold divisions are not

self-evident from the text. 'Other principles of

division' - as O'Neill concedes - 'have had their

vogue'. Thus C.H.Turner isolated six generalising

summaries which, he claimed, divided Acts into six

panels, three for Peter and three for Paul. Turner

may well have been wrong - but the very fact that

* O'Neill p. 71-2.

there is no general agreement about how precisely the Book of Acts should be divided must make us hesitate to accept any theology deduced from such hypothetical divisions.

Moreover, what is meant by saying that Jerusalem 'controls the history?' Jerusalem has been charged with emotional and theological force for much of its long history. It had a special significance to Isaiah, to Titus, to Simon Bar Kochba, to Richard Coeur de Lion, and to Arabs and Israelis today. If his recorded sayings are any adequate guide, it was a profoundly emotional symbol for Jesus of Nazareth himself. O'Neill does not mean to make the prosaic observation that the Jerusalem church acted as a kind of mission headquarters, sending out evangelists and having difficulty with 'far-flung' and independent-minded missionaries like Paul. Rather does he imply that for Luke's story Jerusalem represents both the heavenly and the earthly city.

But precise divisions in Luke's work are as hard to discern as the 'seams' in his sources, and this suggests that as he did not intend his readers to perceive exactly what his sources had been, so he did not wish to indicate his precise plan and purpose in such a way. Clearly there is movement in both parts of his work - towards Jerusalem in the gospel and towards

Rome in Acts; but if he intended his readers to notice the sixfold panels perceived by Turner, or the fivefold division uncovered by O'Neill, why was he not more explicit about it? Would an educated Gentile reader have noticed these stages in the narrative? 8;4 and 11;19 are probably milestones of some kind: they are regarded by Jeremias as new sections in the Antioch source*. 15;36 would also seem to indicate a new departure, though Jeremias again suspects that in what follows (the second missionary journey) the Antioch source is continued. And would the 'general reader', having noticed Luke's milestones, have read on their faces the theological messages perceived by O'Neill?

Now it is true that any literary work can exist at more than one level. Luke could weave into his work archetypal patterns of meaning, vast images dimly perceived, references to Old Testament story, which might be appreciated by the judicious but missed by other readers who would nevertheless understand the plain meaning of the tale. Paul's treatment of poor Eutychus could well be intended to remind us of the raising of the widow's son at Shunem. The parallel could well have been in the mind of Luke or even of

* See chapter 8.

Paul! Yet O'Neill himself indicates the need for caution. Of Stephen's speech he writes : 'There is not enough evidence to prove that Luke held some rudimentary theory of Biblical 'couples': Moses-Aaron, David-Solomon; nor is Stephen regarded as a typologist except in so far as he takes Moses' words about ' a prophet like unto me' to refer to Jesus, and regards the way the Jews treated Jesus as typical'. Nor has O'Neill acceded to the 'self-denying ordinance' of Conzelmann; he is quite prepared to try to penetrate behind the Lucan story and decide what actually happened. Thus he considers that the story told in Acts is in broad outline true. Christianity did spread from Jerusalem to Rome. Luke tells this story in terms of his own presuppositions, which lead to some minor dislocations and inaccuracies. His chief presupposition is that the whole movement took place by divine providence.

One major theological concern of Luke, as seen by O'Neill, was his attitude to the Jews. He wrote in the early second century when the split between Judaism and the new faith was complete. After A.D.70 the 'test benediction'* had been introduced into the synagogue to drive out Hebrew Christians, while the Christians

* See J. Jocz: The Jewish People and Jesus Christ

Ch.2. on the דבר ה' בן דוד

looked at the Jews as Justin looked at Trypho: at least misguided and probably worse.

Luke shared this attitude with Justin and Ignatius! His book traces back the rejection of the gospel by the Jews. It shows how the people, despite all the efforts of the early Christian preachers and the persuasiveness of their arguments from scripture, rejected the gospel! *

Luke's presuppositions about the church and Judaism are worked out in various ways: and most notably through his insistence that Paul always went to the Jewish synagogue first and only after rejection there proceeded to establish gentile churches.** 'From now on I will go to the Gentiles' (Acts 18:6) is one of the key themes of the book, repeated with grave emphasis at the very end: 'Let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles: they will listen' (28:28)

To what extent, then, has Luke's theology distorted his history? O'Neill pronounces him right on two points

* O'Neill p.98.

** This, says O'Neill is unhistorical. We rather think it is an over-simplification by Luke. O'Neill's view that Paul wanted to set up purely gentile churches is an over-simplification too.

and wrong on two others:

'First Luke was correct in saying that the church authorities never at any time demanded that Gentiles who believed in Jesus Christ should be circumcised. In this they were following a possible, if disputed, contemporary Jewish practise regarding proselytes'.*

This is confirmed by Paul's letters: Gal.2;5 - a notorious crux - means that Titus was not circumcised. 'In other words, Paul recognised the jurisdiction of Jerusalem, at least in Jerusalem, and regarded the issue as in principle open - though he would hardly have taken Titus with him if he had had any reason to doubt what the attitude of the Jerusalem authorities would be'.**

Luke's claim that Timothy was circumcised is also credible: while Paul 'opposed agitators who tried

* O'Neill p.103; He refers to Ant.20;41 (Loeb Ed. p.409-410) where King Izates was told that he could 'worship God even without being circumcised if indeed he had decided to be a devoted adherent to Judaism, for it was this that counted more than circumcision.' But was this not a concession for kings only, made on grounds of political expediency, and rather like the bigamy of Philip of Hesse?

** O'Neill p.104.

to persuade Gentile Christians to be circumcised... Timothy was a legitimate exception, being by Jewish law a Jew...he could have been circumcised, before becoming a partner in Paul's mission to the Gentiles; 'for the sake of the Jews' - as Luke's source said.*

Thus Acts is broadly right about the circumcision controversy. There was indeed an agitation against Paul, and it is credible that 'believing Pharisees' Acts 15;5 were at the back of it. They may be the 'false brethren' of Gal.2;4, 'but the mysterious vagueness of the whole episode makes this a difficult piece of evidence to handle.'

Secondly, O'Neill thinks that Luke was right about the decree allegedly made by the Council of Jerusalem. Paul's letters show that the question of table fellowship between Jews and Gentiles was a burning one-on this very issue he withstood Peter to his face (Gal. 2;11).

Luke deals with the problem firstly in the Cornelius incident, and then in the Council of Jerusalem, where James proposes a compromise in the form of the decree. 'The questions now arise' - says

* O'Neill, 2nd. ed. p.105. In this edition source criticism is used to 'get at the facts' - as it was in the days of Harnack.

O'Neill - 'are both these accounts accurate historical reports of the positions held by Peter and James...?' He concludes that 'Peter's vision confirming that God made no distinction between clean and unclean meat, represents a reliable tradition,* which probably goes back to Jesus himself. So much is implied by Mark 7;19, and moreover Paul was himself persuaded ἐν Κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ that nothing was common in itself. However, something like the decree was observed in parts of the church at least, as is made clear by Revelation 2;14-20,** by Irenaeus and the pseudo-Clementines. 'There is no reason to doubt that the three terms of the decree go back to the earliest days of the church...it is never suggested in any of the second century evidence that any of them is an

* There is some ambiguity here; it may well be that the tradition 'nothing is common in itself', goes back to Jesus of Nazareth. The insistence of Mark 7:19 makes this highly likely: but this does not entail that Peter, in historical fact, saw a vision at Joppa which convinced him of the truth of his master's principle.

** At Pergamum 'the disciples of Balaam' taught the faithful to eat idol-meat and practise immorality, while the followers of 'Jezebel' did the same at Thyatira,

innovation...not all are mentioned together...but the decree was specifically directed to Antioch and Syria and Cilicia...the Jerusalem authorities did not think of themselves as making canon law for a Catholic church...The circumstances that led James to suggest his working arrangement did not last very long...There is a prima facie case for allowing that reports both of Peter's vision and of the Jerusalem decree are accurate.'

Now for the two points on which O'Neill thinks that Luke was wrong:

He was mistaken in claiming that Paul and his party promulgated the decree outside Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. Paul's own letters show that he told the Christians at Corinth that they could eat sacrificial meat as long as they did not upset weaker brethren.

(1 Cor.8.) They make no mention of the decree.

Secondly, when Paul got back to Jerusalem (Acts 21;25) he was told of the decree by James as if it were something entirely new,* O'Neill believes that the minority Jewish church were pleading for a compromise

* The remark made by James at Acts 21;25 is seen by some critics as a sure indication of a written source and by others (Loisy and Haenchen) as an 'aside' to the reader. To each his own predilections.

under which they would continue to observe the law of Moses while Gentiles would simply keep the provisions of the Apostolic Decree. This compromise resembled the one favoured by Justin Martyr, who allowed that a Hebrew Christian who observed the law might be saved so long as he did not impose the law on Gentiles as necessary to Salvation.* However, Justin has to admit that not all Gentiles Christians take this liberal line, and some refuse communion with Jewish Christians altogether. Justin would scarcely have admitted that the other view existed if his own view hadnot been..at least under heavy fire. 'The Bar Kochba'revolt came in between the time of Acts and that of Justin, and the modus vivendi which was established in Luke's time, or which he believed should have been established, may well have been challenged when the Jewish people fell into deeper disgrace after the revolt had failed.

But what does O'Neill mean by 'Luke's time'? Does he mean the time of Paul and of Luke his travelling companion? Or does he mean the time before A.D.70 which Luke was writing about in the second century? For Justin the Jewish Christians are a small dwindling

* O'Neill p.116.

group whom he can afford to patronise* whereas in the Acts story the balance of power is quite different. Is it the Bar Kochba revolt, or the War of A.D.66-70 that lies between Luke and Justin? ** 66-70?***

O'Neill believes that a source was used by the author at Acts 21;25, and that this shows that Paul was not bound by the Decree. This only applied to a limited area, while 'Luke possibly took his source in a different sense in order to apply it to his own situation, but the wording of his report indicates that the source supports the picture of Paul's relation

* αὐτοὶ δὲ τὸ ἀσθενὲς τῆς γυναικὸς καὶ τὰ ὀστέα συνελθόντα ἔτι ἐκ τῶν Μωυσεῶν: Dial: 47:5-6

** 'Such Jewish Christians...were a small body in comparison with the Christian community as a whole, and the very indifference of Justin to their maintenance of the traditional usages shows of itself how small their number really was.' G.T.Purves: The testimony of Justin Martyr to Early Christianity; p.107.

· We note too that Luke shows no knowledge of Ebionitism as a theological problem. Justin on the other hand, dissociates himself from those who 'admit that he is the Christ, while holding him to be man of men.' (Dial 48).

to the decrees that we gather from his own epistles.'

Paul's attitude to the Apostolic Decree is certainly difficult to decide. The evidence of the Roman and Corinthian letters hardly seems to show that he accepted its provisions *ex animo*. Acts 16;3-5, which comes at the crucial point when the apostles are led by the spirit towards Europe, looks like a piece of 'idealising' and inspirational comment. The author is determined to show the hard-won unity of the church, preserved and strengthened at Jerusalem, in active operation.*

O'Neill also believes that Luke is wrong to maintain that Paul preached first in the synagogue

* ὡς δὲ διεπορεύοντο τὰς πόλεις, παρεδίδουν αὐτοῖς φυλάσσειν τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ. αἱ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησίαι ἐσπερευοῦντο τῇ πίστει καὶ ἐπερίσσεων τῇ ἀρετῇ καθ' ἡμέραν.

The passage is far from specific both as to the cities and the 'dogmata' that were promulgated in them. It comes at the end of C.H.Turner's fourth panel, and the 'μὲν οὖν' is seen as a sign of a 'landmark' by Trocme.' Our thesis is that Luke is generally trustworthy in his specific assertions about people and places. He is far from specific here.

as a matter of principle. 'Luke...could not imagine Paul, the ever-faithful Jew, as voluntarily leaving the synagogue to live and preach in a Gentile's house, unless official Judaism had compelled him to leave... but Paul's strategy was the entirely new one of setting up purely Gentile churches to be representatives of the great return of the Gentiles, promised in Scripture.'* O'Neill seeks to show this by critical analysis of the story of Paul's stay at Corinth (Acts 18;1-18) Verses 5b and 6, which include the crucial words 'from now on I will go to the Gentiles,' are held to be an interpolation into a written source. Omit them and we are left with a plain narrative: 'Paul wanted to gather Gentiles as Gentiles without their having to become adherents of a Jewish synagogue...A further example where Luke's source preserves the true nature of Paul's missionary strategy occurs in the speech from the temple steps, (Acts 22;17;21) in which Paul implies that he was sent only to the Gentiles.'* *

* Such is the view of Johannes Munck: Paul and the Salvation of Mankind. But if 'purely gentile churches' means 'churches from which Jewish Christians were excluded', then Paul must have withstood Peter at Antioch in vain. He would be practising 'apartheid in reverse'.

** O'Neill p.120.

But the picture which our evidence presents is more complicated than this. Granted that the Paul of Acts goes to the synagogue 'καὶ ἔειπεν τῷ συναγωγῇ' (17;2) as indeed Jesus had done (Lk.4;16). Granted too that 'we turn to the Gentiles' is one of the key themes of Acts (13:46,18:6, 28:28); yet mission work also takes place beside the river at Philippi, on the Areopagus, and before the upcountry crowd of pagans at Lystra. Moreover Paul himself insisted that the gospel brought salvation. 'Ἰσοῦς αἰῶν τε πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ' Rom 1;16. He was heartbroken over the rejection of Israel, and found consolation in the presence of an 'ἐκλογὴν χάριτος'. The greetings which conclude his letters are sent to Gentiles and Jew alike. Priscilla and Aquila are found together with Tryphaena (Rom 16,3 and 12). Aristarchus, Mark and Jesus called Justus were 'the only men of the circumcision among my fellow-workers for the Kingdom of God, and they have been a great comfort to me'. (Col.4;11) The letters show us a Paul profoundly wounded by his failure to win Jewish converts and rejoicing in those he had. Moreover he treated his people, Jew and Gentile alike, as 'fellow-members of the Kingdom of God'. 'Thus we cannot accept O'Neill's view that Paul deliberately chose, as his God-given vocation, to preach only to the Gentiles.

'No doubt he looked for his first Gentile converts in synagogues in the towns he visited, but his own aim was to set up purely Gentile congregations.'* It is one thing to say that Paul felt called to preach to the Gentiles, and another to say that he had no interest in saving Jews. If he went to the Jewish synagogue with the sole aim of drawing away its Gentile adherents then he was a mere ecclesiastical 'poacher': probably some of the synagogue authorities regarded him as simply that, but they were hardly able to do justice to the motives of a man who continued to maintain, against the force of his own logic, that the Jew had much advantage in every way.**

We conclude that Luke has certainly selected and emphasised 'We go now to the Gentiles'*** as one of his theological themes, but his presentation in Acts is a fair attempt at accuracy by a Gentile writer

* O'Neill p. 117-8.

** Rom 3;1.

*** Luke's attitude to Jewry is - to use contemporary jargon-'ambivalent'. On the one hand he portrays the ideal figure of 'the noble Jew':- Anna and Simeon (Lk.2;22-38). On the other hand 'the Jews' dog Paul's footsteps to the end: but even at the last there are a few Jewish converts: (Acts 28;24).

who saw in the growth of the Gentile church a triumph of grace, and felt little personal involvement in the rejection of Israel.* To explain Luke's double mistake - about the Apostolic decree and Paul's missionary tactics - O'Neill proceeds boldly against the tide of much recent criticism and argues that Luke has misunderstood his sources.

Consider, for example, the famous crux at Acts 15:16, where James quotes from Amos 9:11 in what appears to be the Greek (LXX) translation. This is regarded by Haenchen as proof that Luke composed the speech of James himself. Not so, replies O'Neill: 'The citation from Amos is not uniformly from the LXX, but the first part, a rendering of Amos 9:11 in Acts 15:16, is a free and independent translation from the Hebrew. This must indicate that a citation, originally wholly independent of the LXX, was partly 'corrected' by reference to the LXX... What Haenchen takes to be a clinching argument that Luke who (it is

* The difference between Acts and Romans 9-11 is that one was written by a Gentile and the other by a Jew. The latter is emotionally engaged at a far deeper level than the former. One might compare a sympathetic analysis of racial conflict by a well-informed outsider with an account by someone who has had to live through it. In other words 'We can't all be Martin Luther King'.

assumed) knew only the LXX, turns out to be fairly strong evidence that Luke used a source.

Two events, says O'Neill - have been telescoped in the story told in Acts 15: One is a visit by a delegation from Antioch to Jerusalem, which included Barnabas and Paul. This corresponds to the second visit of Galatians 2, (while the second visit of Acts - the 'famine relief visit' of 11:30 and 12:24 - is unlikely to have taken place).^{*} Paul and Barnabas are thus deleted from Acts 15, and we are left with a Jerusalem source, describing a compromise between Peter and the Jerusalem church about table fellowship with Gentiles, which had been agreed on long before Paul's visit in Galatians 2.

This theory seems as likely - or as unlikely - as most others about the 'Council of Jerusalem', but if source criticism of Acts is to become a respectable

^{*} We will argue (ch.6) that it is unreasonable to dismiss the famine relief visit in this way. The correspondence with the account of Jewish famine relief efforts given by Josephus in Ant.20:2, together with the people and places named (Claudius, Agabus, Antioch, Jerusalem) make it reasonable to suppose that we have a report of fact. It could be of course that Luke was misinformed about membership of the relief team.

discipline once more, it will have to be extended beyond the confines of Acts 15. O'Neill's Antioch source theory is not that of Jeremias, which offers at least a clear and consistent explanation of the material before us.

O'Neill also argues that Luke, misunderstanding Paul, thought that there was one straight pressure that led from Jerusalem, the capital of Judaism, to Rome, the capital of the Gentiles.*'...Luke was writing at a time when events had made it clear that the church's future lay principally with the Gentiles...(But) Luke was not the heir of Pauline theology. Luke has not inherited the Pauline epistles.'

On the other hand Luke was greatly influenced by Hellenistic Jewish missionary literature - this is one of O'Neill's most interesting points-and that literature had already chosen the medium of sacred history for evangelism. 'Demetrius (Artapanos) and Eupolemus simply recounted the history of the patriarchs with more or less elaboration, the writer of the wisdom of Solomon meditated on the Exodus... Philo, though eager to put the discussion into a philosophical plane, started from the history and character of Moses...Ezekiel the tragedian wrote 'The

* O'Neill p.133,134.

Exodus' - a historical drama...The lesson in all these works was that God had manifestly worked in the history of Israel. It has required the essays of Dibelius to drive home the simple fact that Acts is designed to show the same thing for the early history of the church'.* Thus the grand apologetic purpose of Acts was to commend the faith to thoughtful Gentiles.

Four points of contact between Acts and Hellenistic Jewish literature are suggested: Firstly there is the way in which the heroes of the faith are commended. Moses, for example, taught Orpheus, invented ships and philosophy, and escaped miraculously from prison: or at least, Artapanos said he did. This seems to parallel the various miraculous escapes in Acts, and the apotheosis of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra.

Secondly, Philo and Josephus both claim for their faith the protection of the Roman state, just as Luke does. Thirdly, Jewish missionary literature adopted a philosophical tone in preaching to the Gentiles: the appeal to natural revelation, made in simple terms to the 'natives' at Lystra and in 'highbrow' terms to the philosophers at Athens**can also be found in the wisdom of Solomon, and the letter to Aristaeas. The

* O'Neill p.142.

** Acts 14;15-17.

latter goes so far as to claim that the Jews worship 'God the guardian and creator of all, whom all men, including ourselves, King, call by different names, such as Zeus or Dis.' (Aristeas 15;16) Lastly, Luke uses the term 'metanoia' in a sense familiar in Hellenistic Judaism, where it refers to the conversion of Gentiles to true religion. Thus when Paul spoke to Felix and Drusilla 'περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἐγκρατείας καὶ τοῦ κρίματος τοῦ μέλλοντος' this recalls Aristeas, in whose letter Pharaoh is told that God commends 'temperance and righteousness' O'Neill concludes that 'the summary of Paul's preaching given here is typical of a certain approach to Gentiles which was made by Jews of the Dispersion'.*

Two cautionary points must be made before this

* And Paul was himself a Jew of the Dispersion. Why should he not deliver a lecture on the subject of 'ἐγκρατεία'? The 'historical' explanation of the text - that it was a shrewd reference to the marital irregularities of Felix - is rejected by O'Neill in a footnote on p.158. It hardly seems possible to prove a link with Hellenistic Judaism on the basis of this word, when 'ἐγκρατεία' was one of the qualifications required by Plato's Guardians. (republic Bk.4)

valuable suggestion is explored further. Firstly, by the beginning of the Christian era, the Jews already regarded their own past, at least from Abraham to the return from exile, as a sacred history. When Philo wrote the 'Life of Moses' he was telling the 'old old story' in a vivid and contemporary way. So too was Ezekiel the Tragedian when he produced 'The Exodus: an historical drama'. Luke, on the other hand, was not telling an old story when he wrote Acts: rather was it a new account of the Acts of God on behalf of those who followed 'the way'. Thus it also needs to be compared with other edifying Jewish works - like 3 Maccabees, Aristeeas, Philo's 'Legatio ' and 'in Flaccum' - which saw the hand of God in more recent events.

Secondly, if Acts can be linked with Jewish religious works of this kind, what happens to the case for a second century date based on parallels with Justin Martyr? Philo wrote in the forties of the first century, and Aristeeas was composed it seems, not later than 100 B.C. The links which seem to exist between Acts and Hellenistic Jewish writings only serve to cast doubt on the case for a second century date!

In conclusion we agree with O'Neill that one of Luke's major concerns was to win educated Gentiles

to the new religion.* We agree too that when he wrote, Gentile Christianity was the faith of the future and Jewish Christianity was under a cloud. But we do not need to look beyond Bar Kochba's revolt to find a suitable date. The first Jewish War, which brought fame to Josephus in the literary if not military field, may have helped to impel the pen of Luke as well.* Much of O'Neill's argument about Luke's theological purpose would still be valid if he wrote in the seventies of the first century.

* This much is claimed by the preface (Lk 1;1-4) and Luke's apologetic aim is made even clearer if the word 'κατὰ χρίστου', as has been argued by H.J.Cadbury, implies that Theophilus had received hostile reports about the Christians.

CHAPTER 3.

Jewish Salvation-history: some contrasts and comparisons.

If recent study of the Lucan writings has tended to emphasise- and perhaps overemphasise - the importance on theological motives and interests - there have also been signs of a counter-movement aimed at redressing the balance. The periodical 'Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses' for Nov. 1970 contained two articles: one by W. S. Kümmel entitled 'Luke under fire in contemporary theology'. Another was by W. C. Van Unnik: 'Artistic elements in the gospel of Luke'.* Kümmel's article deals indeed with Luke's theology (or religious teaching?) and defends him against attempts to downgrade his work as a specimen of 'early catholicism' who had lapsed from the pure gospel. Van Unnik takes another direction: 'Luke has become a key-figure in New Testament studies; a theologian in his own right'. 'Not without reason did I write, some years ago, that Luke-Acts had become a storm-centre in the course of contemporary research. But it is a curious fact that hardly any attention has been given to the artistic aspect of his literary activity. In the collection in which my

* 'Luc en accusation dans la théologie contemporaine'.

'Elements artistiques dans l'Evangile de Luc'.

article appeared, 'Studies in Luke Acts'...nobody dealt with this theme. 'Van Unnik then proceeds to investigate the artistic value of Luke's work in comparison with other ancient historians. 'I must profess the greatest possible respect'...he says...'for the work of Formgeschichte and Redaktionsgeschichte, but it is also necessary to study the gospels in their entirety and not in broken fragments'.*

Van Unnik also defends Luke against the charge of vague geography, which plays so large a part in the analysis of Conzelmann. Luke was no vaguer in his statements about geography than were other ancient historians. Of Sallust, for example, it has been said that 'His chronology is careless and confused. His topographical data in the Bellum Jugurthinum are inadequate, although his official sojourn in Africa must have given him the opportunity to gather more accurate information had he desired to do so. Even Tacitus does not escape: 'The topographical information

* Il faut aussi avoir le désir d'étudier les évangiles et leurs récits globalement et non seulement en miettes écrasées'. See also R.Morgenthaler: Die Lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis Part 2: Ch.3 p. 96 - 105.

and the data provided about important campaigns are insufficient.* So insufficient are they that Celtic scholars are still searching for the site of the Mons Graupius, where the Caledonians made their last stand against Agricola!

A similar line had already been taken in an essay by W. den Boer of Leyden: 'Some remarks on the beginnings of Christian historiography' which was published in 1958.** In the field of history, he wrote, 'one of the most important subjects of controversy is still the relation of secular and sacred history, whether they are affiliated or alien to one another. 'Den Boer proceeds to argue, like Van Unnik, that Luke is much closer in method and intention to ancient Greek and Roman historians than is generally allowed. His purpose is to give Theophilus
' ἀκριβὲς λόγος ' - and that means 'exact information'

* Laistner: The Greater Roman Historians: Berkeley, Los Angeles, p.58. If Luke's poor geography proves that he had never been to Palestine, would the equally poor geography of Sallust show that he had never been to Africa?

** Texte und Untersuchungen: no.79: Studia Patristica: Vol.IV p.348 ff.

in a historical sense; not, as Ed.Meyer thought, religious truth.

Den Boer argues that if we compare Luke with classical historians, there is, for example, no difference of principle in the treatment of speeches. 'Thucydides...tried to preserve as faithfully as possible the general sense of the speech as actually delivered; which is more than can be said for most historians of the imperial period. Tacitus, for example sometimes took the wildest liberties when reporting speeches of senators and emperors! To insert speeches in an historical work is a special device of antiquity...which is not only a way of making a conscious approach to the past, but also a means of introducing the personal views and comments of the author himself. In this respect there is no difference at all between Luke and his pagan contemporaries.'

So too with the insertion of speeches at key points in the narrative: 'The Melian Dialogue implies a formidable warning, a lesson taught by history itself, right on the threshold of the turning point of the Peloponnesian war, the fatal Athenian expedition to Sicily. The function of the dialogue in the composition of Thucydides' work is just the same, for example, as St.Paul's last words at Ephesus (Acts20) ...in the composition of Acts.'

So too with the use of speeches to provide a running commentary on events: 'The debates in the Athenian Assembly and in the Roman Senate are recorded in the same way as, say, those of the Council of the Apostles at Jerusalem (Acts 15). As far as the mode of expression is concerned, there is no difference whatever to be observed between the Biblical and the Greco-Romantype of historical report.' 'So too with the alleged impersonality of ancient speeches. Tacitus rewrote the speech made by Claudius when he admitted Gauls to senatorial rank. In the words of Sir Ronald Syme: 'Tacitus is ruthless towards Claudius Ceasar. Next to nothing is left of the imperial orator, The reason is not far to seek. The theme was solemn and majestic- nothing less than eight centuries of Roman history - and not to be spoiled by the Claudius whom men knew, and the document revealed - trivial, inept, wantonly impairing the validity of his own argumentation. Instead of Claudius a depersonalised imperator must speak for Rome.' *

* R. Syme: Tacitus; p.319. The speech on the admission of the 'Tres Galliae' to the Senate is one which, by good fortune, has survived in its original form as well as in the version preserved by Tacitus.

Den Boer argues that allowances made for Tacitus must be conceded to Luke as well.: 'It is a pure anachronism to measure both by the standards of modern historiography. Both' did their best to obtain information about the arguments and the character of the speeches' but 'there must have been wide differences between the material they were able to collect for one speech and for another.'

Yet, is there not a deeper difference - much superficial resemblance being conceded - between the Christian and the pagan historian? Does not the former chronicle the Acts of God, while the latter write history in purely human terms? Not so, says den Boer: Arrian could declare that 'what is unbelievable to the historian who relies on probability, will appear not to be quite unbelievable when divine interference with history is taken into account.* Moreover, the ancient historians showed great interest in exorcism and miracles. They believed in a divine power which revealed itself

* Arrian: Anabasis: VI:2.

in human behaviour'.* In considering the circumcision

* Den Boer p.354. Thus for example, Dio Cassius declares
'I had previously written and published a book on the
dreams and portents which inspired Severus with the
hope of attaining the imperial office. This work was
read by the Emperor himself in a copy presented to
him by me, and he was gracious enough to reward
me with a long and complimentary letter. This reached
me in the evening before I went to bed, and in my
sleep the composition of an historical work was
enjoined on me by a supernatural power.' (*καὶ
μοι καθενδόντι προσέταξε τὸ
θεῖμον ἱστορίαν γράψεν*)

Dio: Book LXXIII;23: Loeb Ed.Vol.9p.118) Nothing
inspires an author like recognition by Top People,
and it is not difficult to rationalise Dio's
inspiration in terms of Freudian dream psychology!
Nor is it necessary to do this, to concede to Freud
that τὸ θεῖμον is pure illusion. The portents
seen by Severus were, it seems, dreams as well. Dio
records them in Bk.LXXV:3 (Loeb Ed.Vol.9.p.166-7)
'These things he had learned from dreams: but also
when awake he had, while yet a youth, seated himself
on the imperial throne.'

debate,' for example, we ought not to decide quickly between Luke and Paul before remembering the dictum of Thucydides: 'The task has been laborious, for witnesses of the same particular events have given versions that have varied according to their sympathies or retentive powers'.*

Den Boer sums up: 'In the work of the first Christian historian, the preface, the speeches, and the recording of the supernatural have their parallels in the pagan historiography of the age... His scientific intention does not differ from that of others: of Herodotus, Thucydides or Polybius'.

Two comments may be made on these acute observations: firstly by demonstrating that Luke did not differ from other ancient historians in his treatment of the speeches, we do not thereby prove the entire authenticity of the speeches as verbatim reports. Luke turns out to be no worse and no better than his contemporaries. A second doubt could concern the supernatural: is there really as high a proportion of signs and wonders in Tacitus and Polybius as we find in Luke-Acts? Is there as much supernatural, and is it the same

* 1:22:3.

kind of supernatural?*

Den Boer argues that ancient historians - and it seems the later ones in particular, were familiar with the idea of divine action in history. They spoke of the deeds of emperors as the deeds of Gods:**

* Scholars of the vintage of Dr. George Benson, with whom we began this study, would have answered, 'Of course not! There are fewer miracles recorded in Polybius because fewer miracles were in fact taking place'. The tenor of Den Boer's argument - and our own - is a measure of the degree to which the category of the miraculous - at least in its traditional form - has become an embarrassment in the last two hundred years. There are two miracles on the triumphal column of Marcus Aurelius, both of which, intervention of the rain - god and lightning flash - can be rationalised as natural events.

** Den Boer quotes the interesting case of Arrian, who based his account of Alexander's expedition on the report given by Ptolemy, who was the most reliable source because 'kings do not lie'. 'Personally I regard Ptolemy and Aristobolus as more trustworthy authorities than the rest - Aristobolus because he was King Alexander's companion in arms: Ptolemy for the additional reason that he was a king and would therefore have been more deeply disgraced than ordinary mortals by failing to tell the truth'. (Anabasis Bk.1:3)

For them the vox Augusti became the Vox Dei. In the end 'Christian historiography was unable to escape the influence of the emperor worship.' This can be clearly seen in the writings of Eusebius of Caesarea, whom den Boer rates much lower as a historian than Luke. 'St. Luke who is rarely included among the historians, portrays the life of the first Christians for us more as history than does Eusebius with the church history of the first centuries. Theophilus' informant was much more strongly influenced by the tradition of Greek historiography than the learned scholar Eusebius...(who) remains in some aspects small, an apologist and a pedant.'* Thus, according to den Boer, it is in the fourth century that Christian historiography deteriorates into propaganda. 'If the admirable attitude of the last great historiographer of Rome, Ammianus Marcellinus, towards Christendom is considered, it can only be said that the attempt to be objective, even towards an opponent - this heritage of classical historiography is preserved not by the Christian of the fourth century, but by the pagans.'

Den Boer's high estimate of the historical value of Luke's work is a valuable corrective to some recent

* Den Boer p. 361.

writing on the subject: the intention of the dedication to Theophilus must be taken seriously.* Yet clearly honourable intentions may not be enough. Luke's life of Jesus - the first and no doubt the best - is clearly a simplification. His geography is no vaguer perhaps than that of the Agricola, but it is by no means as accurate as we would desire - even if one queries the theological motivations that Conzelmann is able to discover in it.** Something must also be gratefully conceded to form-critical analysis, even if we resist the temptation to abandon written sources altogether. Again, some of the stories told in Acts - and notably in the first five chapters - have the appearance of venerable folk tradition; this does not compel us to dismiss them as unhistorical legend: the general picture may be accurate enough and the incidents recorded - Ananias and Sapphira and the apostles before the Sanhedrin - are we think, memories of real events. It is good, in studying the **Lucan** writings, to recall the dictum of Erich Auerbach:

* As den Boer points out, A.J. Toynbee took the preface seriously enough to include it in his anthology: 'Greek Historical Thought' between Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Josephus. (p.49)

** T.S.L. p. 18-94.

'to write history is so difficult that most historians are compelled to make concessions to the saga technique.' It could be that Luke has produced a history not unmixed with saga.* It may be worthwhile therefore, to follow up the suggestion made by J.C.O'Neill** and compare his work with other ancient writers, in particular with Jewish exponents of 'theological history'. We propose to consider in turn the Letter of Aristeas, the Books of Maccabees, and Philo's 'In Flaccum'.

* Clearly we must define our terms carefully. The word 'saga' has itself been borrowed from Norse tradition, and implies a lengthy period of transmission of material by oral means, 'I heard men say' is a standard opening formula in Germanic verse. There is a big difference between what Acts tells us about Peter and what we learn from 'Beowulf' about the deeds of Germanic warlords of the dark ages. But there was a period of oral tradition, and form-criticism has taught us something about how the deeds of Jesus - and perhaps of some of his followers - were recalled and commended.

** See the previous chapter.

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

The letter of Aristeas appears to be a first-hand account of the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. Aristeas, who claims to have been a member of an Alexandrian delegation sent to Jerusalem to obtain a copy of the law and to recruit a team of translators, writes to his brother Philocrates, who is 'anxious to hear whatever makes for the soul's edification'.* The work of Aristeas (or Pseudo-Aristeas as Swete calls him) was clearly a success, for Josephus** reproduced two fifths of

* Βουλόμενον συνακοῦεν ὅσα πρὸς ἐπισκευὴν
ψυχῆς ἐπάρχει (Swete p 520)

Greek text in H.B.Swete:Intro.to the Old Testament in Greek:pp.519-574 English Text in H.St.J.Thackeray:
The Letter of Aristeas: SPC K.1918.

** Swete sums up Josephus thus: 'He gives in the twelfth book of the Jewish Antiquities a paraphrase of about two fifths of the letter..he has taken the trouble to reshape every sentence, while retaining many of the characteristic words of Aristeas. Under the circumstances it is not always possible to reconstruct his text, and at some of the most difficult passages his evidence is uncertain: in some cases the text was certainly unintelligible to him.' Does not this cast an indirect light on Luke's handling of his sources?

his work in paraphrase form in the twelfth book of his Antiquities, while Eusebius the church historian included about a quarter of the letter verbatim in books 8 and 9 of his Praeparatio Evangelica. He was popular because he gave a readable account of an important event - the making of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. This great literary effort was of high importance to Jews and Christians alike, and the story of its completion was further embellished with the passage of time, so that by the time of Irenaeus we reach the report that the translators worked in isolation and were divinely guided to produce identical versions, "so that even the Gentiles who were present perceived that the scriptures had been translated through the inspiration of God."*

Aristeas presents, at least on the surface, some interesting resemblances to the Acts of the Apostles: Its contents may be summarised as follows:

1) Aristeas' introductory address to Philocrates - which is considerably longer than that of Luke to

*Irenaeus: 'Against all heresies: ' 3:2:2. A handy collection of later traditions about the Greek Old Testament can be found in the Appendix to Thackeray's edition.

Theophilus (1-8).

2) The origin of the translation scheme: a proposal by Demetrius* of Phalerum, the king's librarian, to have the Jewish law translated into Greek. This is followed by a decision on the king, Ptolemy Philadelphus, (285-247 B.C.) to set free all Jewish slaves. The king then writes to the Jewish High Priest asking for the appointment of a team of translators. This is done, and the names of the translators are recorded, together with the memorandum submitted by Demetrius the librarian, the king's decree liberating Jewish slaves, and his letter to the High Priest. There are six translators from each of the twelve tribes, making seventy-two in all. (9-51)

3) The third section is taken up with a long description of the royal presents sent to Jerusalem. (51-82) These included a table which was intended to be 'of gigantic proportions': finding this impracticable, however, the king ordered that it should surpass in artistic quality rather than in quantity.

4) There follows a description of Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside. The temple comes first, followed by the citadel which guards it - no more

* Demetrius ruled Athens in the Macedonian interest after the death of Alexander.

than five sightseers being admitted at one time - and after that the city and the surrounding countryside. (83-120)

5) The High Priest Eleazar bids farewell to the team of translators (121-127).

6) He delivers a long apology for the Jewish law, contrasting the religion of Israel with that of Egypt in terms far from flattering to the latter. (128-171)

τῶν γὰρ ἄλλων πολυματαίων τί δεῖ καὶ λέγειν,
, Αἰγυπτίων τε καὶ τῶν παρεπλησίων, οἵτινες ἐπὶ
θῆρίᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐρπετῶν... τὴν ἀπέρρυσιν
πέποιήνται;

(Swete:p543.1:8-10)

7) The translators go down to Alexandria and are welcomed with great enthusiasm by the king: 'For the strain upon the high-strung soul and the overwhelming sense of honour where our achievements are successful constrain to tears' (172 - 181)

8) A splendid banquet is held in honour of the visiting scholars, and turns out to be a great success. Instead of sacred heralds and sacrifices, the king requests "Eleazar, the oldest of the Jewish priests, to offer a prayer." (182 - 186)

9) During the great feast, which lasts no less than seven days, the king puts difficult questions to the translators, all of which are satisfactorily answered. Example: Upon what matters should kings spend most

of their time?

Answer: (from scholar no.68) 'In reading and in the study of the records of official journeys, which are drawn up for him with a view to the amelioration and preservation of his subjects.'*

10) The translation is done, on the island of Pharos connected to the mainland by a causeway. The completed translation is read to the Jewish people and a copy presented to the king.

The latter enquires why so noble a task had not been attempted before, and is reminded of the fate of Theopompus the historian and Theodectes the tragic poet. The former became temporarily mad, and the latter was afflicted with cataract of the eyes, because they attempted to introduce into their works material from the Jewish scriptures.

*'Εν ταῖς ἀναγνώσεσι καὶ ἐν ταῖς τῶν ποικίλων ἀπογραφαῖς διατρίβειν, ὅσαι πρὸς τοὺς βασιλεῖας ἀναγεγραμμέναι τυγχάνουσι πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν καὶ διαμνηστὴν ἐν ἑστέπαι.

(Swete p.568:8-10.) Though the seventy two translators are named in section 2, their names are not connected with the seventy two correct answers.

11) Having finished their work, the translators return to Judaea, each having received 'three of the finest changes of raiment, and two talents of gold, and a side-board of a talent in weight, and all the furniture for the three couches of a dining room.' Eleazar the High Priest receives even larger bounties.
(317 - 321)

12) On a concluding note, to Philocrates, Aristeeas declares: 'I believe that thou findest greater pleasure in these matters than in the books of the romancers.*(322)

But it looks, alas, as if Aristeeas is less than candid, and that he is to be numbered among the 'romancers' himself. He has produced no διήγησις but 'Jewish propaganda in a heathen mask'. Such was the verdict of Schürer,** who added that 'the object of the narrative is by no means that of relating the history in the abstract, but the history so far as it shows what esteem and admiration were felt for the Jewish law and for Judaism in general by even heathen authorities, such as King Ptolemy and his Ambassador Aristeeas.'

* Σὺ δέ, καθὼς ἐπηγγελάμεν, ἀπέχεις τὴν διήγησιν, ὡς ΦιλόκρATES. τέρπειν γὰρ οὐδαί σε ταῦτα ἢ τὰ τῶν μυθολόγων βιβλία.

**The Jewish people in the time of Jesus Christ
(Div.11, Vol.111: p.308)

The shortcomings of Pseudo-Aristeas (as it seems he must be called) were listed with some severity by R.H.Charles:*

1) The author has given himself away by commenting that all business 'used to be transacted by means of decrees (28) and that arrangements made for conducting feasts' may still be seen to this day(182). In other words, he lived later than the time of Philadelphus.**

2) Worse still, he has committed notorious historical blunders. Demetrius of Phalerum was never the royal librarian, and was never in favour with Ptolemy Philadelphus. Nor did that king ever gain 'a naval victory over Antigonus' as specified by Aristeas (180) Menedemus the philosopher, who allegedly took part in ethical dialogue with the king and the seventy two

* Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha Vol II p.68.

** 'The Cananite was then in the land' : anachronisms like this were observed as early as the time of Moses Maimonides to indicate that the Pentateuch in its present form could not be the work of Moses. However, he 'prudently refrained from drawing any conclusion,' but remarked 'If you penetrate the secret of...' 'The Cananite was then in the land...' 'you will discover the truth.' (G.Buchanan Gray: A Critical Introduction to the O.T. p.16)

translators, lived in Eretria and almost certainly died before the time alleged by Aristeas. The anecdotes about Theopompus and Theodectes are highly unlikely.

Most extraordinary of all, the description of the beautiful table sent by the Egyptian King to Jerusalem (57-58) is taken from the LXX translation which had not been undertaken at that time! The writer refers to the Law as 'Scripture' (168) and his efforts may be compared to 'a modern historical novel with a purpose'; their chief value is to show what was believed at that time about the origins of the LXX.

(To these negative points made by Charles we add the following: Aristeas is very vague when it comes to reporting actions: his account of the journey of the translation team gives no details and no itinerary: in spite of the circumstantial account of the names of the seventy-two scholars, these names are not linked with the seventy-two correct answers given to the king: he also spends much of his time in describing the king's gifts to the High Priest Eleazar, the city of Jerusalem and its surroundings, together with the moral superiority of the Jewish law: and while he insists on the excellence of the translator's work, he gives no specimen of it whatsoever.)

If then it is conceded that Aristeeas is fiction and not fact, of what relevance is it to the study of Acts?*

1) Date: Firstly its date is as problematical as the date of the Lucan writings, if not more so. Estimates vary from about 200 B.C. to the time of Caligula. In favour of an early date were the arguments of Schürer: the Jews garrison the temple and are ruled by their own High Priest under a moderate Egyptian protectorate. This implies a period before the conquest of Palestine by the Seleucids. As against this, the seventy two (imaginary) translators include a number of famous Maccabean names: a Matthias, 3 Simons, 3 Judases and 3 Jonathans. The evidence of the papyri - much of it

* According to Charles: 'The genuineness and authenticity of the letter were first questioned by Ludovico de Vives in his commentary on Augustine de Civ. Dei. xviii:4 (1522) and subsequently by Scaliger. Ussher and Voss defended the letter, but its claim to belong to the time of Philadelphus was finally destroyed by Humphrey Hody (1684-1705) though unsuccessful attempts were made later on by Grinfield in his apology for the LXX (1855) and by Oeconomus in his *περὶ τῶν ὁ ἑρμηνευτῶν* (Athens 1844-49) to rescussitate its reputation.

'e silentio' argues for a later date. The use of the title 'king's friends' is not found there till the time of Ptolemy V (205-182 B.C.) On the other hand, it is unreasonable to date the letter as late as the reign of Caligula because this would hardly allow enough time for it to be cited as authoritative by Josephus. Moreover, contrary to the testimony of Aristeas, the island of Pharos was uninhabited after the conquest of Egypt by Julius Caesar.

A precise date - 96-93 B.C. - was proposed by Wendland on the grounds that Gaza is said to be Jewish territory, and it fell to the Hasmonaeans in 96 B.C. Against this, however, Charles notes: 'Thrice in the epistle the law is spoken of as scripture. There seems to be no trace of the application of the term 'scripture' to the Old Testament before the Christian era. We have no evidence either of the application of the allegorical method in the manner in which Aristeas used it before that date.'

'...We seem to have therefore one set of facts - e.g. the Ptolemaic background and the absence of any reference to the Roman occupation of Palestine, which compel us to date the epistle before 70 B.C., and another set of facts which suggest it may not have originated till the Christian era.'

A similar problem arises with Acts: one set of

data - as put forward by A.N.Sherwin-White-seem to imply a first century date - A.D.80 or even before, while another set, as is claimed by J.C.O'Neill, take us into the second century and the time of Justin Martyr.*

Charles proposes a solution to the Aristeeas problem that will hardly do for Acts: that of partition. 'The epistle was issued in its present form at the commencement of the Christian era...but a large part of it - possibly the whole except the law section (138-171) was in existence before and belongs to the period 130-70 B.C.'

One reason for the difficulty in dating the work is that the pseudonymous author, while making enough slips to give himself away, did not make enough to give himself away completely. His account of the preparation of the LXX translation passed as accurate for centuries. No doubt people, as usual, believed what they wanted to believe, but another reason for the considerable success of pseudo-Aristeeas was his accuracy in local colour.

2) Local Colour: As a measure of the difficulty of disengaging fact from fiction consider the description

* Even then, however, the limits remain much narrower in the case of Acts.

of Jerusalem and Palestine as Aristeas gives it (in sections 83-120) This completely failed to impress the late Johannes Munck, who used the work of Aristeas to emphasise by contrast the reliability of Luke. 'When Luke's work is compared with that of Aristeas, the difference between an account of events and an edifying story can be clearly seen. The author of Aristeas speaks of Jerusalem and Palestine in such a way that it must be assumed that he had never been there or read descriptions of the conditions thereof. Apart from the fact that he seems to have acquired some of his incorrect information from the Old Testament, he is describing an ideal country and an ideal city. With regard to Egypt it is a different matter, for he did know the conditions there. One must suppose that he had looked into the archives in order to write the edict of liberation of the Jewish slaves (Aristeas 22-28) as convincingly as possible, but its content is freely invented and its form shows characteristics which do not belong to a Ptolemaic edict.*

Thus Munck thought that Aristeas knew a lot about Egypt but little about Palestine. Quite another was the impression he made on Thackeray. 'Quaint as

* Acts (Anchor Bible p.XLI)

may his ideas be on - e.g. the course of the Jordan - his description of Jerusalem itself has the vivid touch of an eyewitness. Surely, we are inclined to say, this man was a spectator at the waving curtain or veil at the entrance to the temple (86) or was given proof on the spot of the existence of the underground cisterns beneath and around the temple area. (88-91) of which we learn from other sources.' Sir George Adam Smith, indeed, regards the letter 'as the work, perhaps about 200 B.C. of a Jewish writer, well acquainted with the city and the land'...'standing on the Akra, this observer had the bulk of the town before him on the south-west and north-west hills'. Thus the description which struck Munck as fantastic was seen by Thackeray and G.A.Smith as strong evidence of an eyewitness!

One thing is clear: eyewitness or not, Aristeeas was certainly concerned to present an ideal picture of Palestine: His description of the country is an eulogy throughout. The temple water supply, for example, includes 'wonderful underground reservoirs passing description'. The work of the priests 'in its silent and orderly performance could in no way be surpassed.' On seeing the High Priest in his robes, the author was 'struck with amazement'. Palestine as seen by Aristeeas was 'God's own country' and included the

river Jordan which never runs dry'. On the river Jordan, indeed, it must be doubted whether the author was accurately informed, because he declares that 'over against the district of the people of Ptolemais it issues into another river and flows out into the sea!!! This 'quaint' statement (as Thackeray terms it) certainly seems to impair his credibility, and the question of his personal knowledge of Palestine had better be left open.*

* His description of the High Priest's garments concludes with a fine example of 'edifying language' or 'Erbauungsstil'. Aristeeas, who loves resounding liturgical and 'numinous' words, never uses one where

he can employ two! ὥστε νομίζαν εἰς ἕτερον
ἐληλυθέναι, ἐκτὸς τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ διαβεβαιούμεαι,
πάντα ἀνθρώπων προσελθόντα τῇ θεωρίᾳ τῶν
προεργασμένων εἰς ἐκπλήξιν ἦσαν καὶ θαύμασμον
ἀδιήγητον, μετατρέποντα τῇ διανοίᾳ
διὰ τὴν περὶ ἕκαστον ἀγίαν
κατασκευήν... ἡ δὲ συμφάνεια τούτων ἐμποιεῖ
φοβὸν καὶ ταραχήν. (99: Suet. p 537)

'Awe-discomfort-amazement-wonder indescribable'; evocative words like this are used by Aristeeas for their 'incantation value'. Luke's own 'edifying style' as seen for example in Acts 18:22-23- is moderate and much less verbose. So is that of Maccabees.

It seems to be agreed, however, that Aristeeas was much better informed about Egypt. In 1870 Lumbroso wrote: 'There is not a court title, an institution, a law, a magistracy, an office, a technical term, a formula, a remarkable turn of language in this letter, there is no piece of evidence concerning the civil history of the epoch, which is not found registered in the papyri and the inscriptions and confirmed by them. 'On this Thackeray commented: 'The author.... is thoroughly conversant with the technical and official language of Alexandria and the court, and it is probable that his interesting allusions to Alexandrian life and customs are equally trustworthy ,...In these matters the information he supplies may be used to supplement, where it is not confirmed, by that of the papyri.'

Thus, in sum, the Egyptian 'local colour' of Aristeeas is found to be so accurate when compared with the papyri that it may be used as evidence even when there is no other confirmation available.

This seems relevant to Lucan studies in that one of the main supports of the claim to accuracy made for Luke-Acts and Acts in particular - is accuracy in local detail: thus we have the Asiarchs at Ephesus, the Politarchs at Thessalonica, Publius the correctly named 'First Man' of Malta and so forth. Will the

accuracy of the (pseudepigraphical) Aristeas turn out to confirm the historical reliability of Acts or to discredit it? A second century author, writing a historical novel, could if so minded, have taken pains to get his local details right: Asiarchs, Politarchs, and all.

There seems to be evidence that the local colour of Aristeas dates him to the later, rather than to the earlier Ptolemaic age,. Thus, for example, the author goes to Jerusalem accompanied by Andreas 'chief of the bodyguards' (Ἀνδρεῶν τῶν ἀρχιστρατοφυλάκων) Strack has shown* that this latter compound word of Byzantine length does not occur in the papyri till 145 B.C.

The logical conclusion to be drawn is that the author was an Alexandrian Jew, anxious to make propaganda on behalf of his faith, with its temple

* So says R.H.Charles: Vol 11p 99n. The same point is made about the use of the term 'King's Friends'.

Eleazar tells the king that he has offered sacrifice'
Περὶ σοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀδελφῆς καὶ τῶν τέκνων
καὶ τῶν φίλων.

(Swete p 528 Charles p 86)

and scripture.* The lesson for Lucan studies is that accurate local colour cannot of itself guarantee the historicity of a narrative in detail. It links an author with a locality and not necessarily with the tale he tells.**

On the other hand, even the letter of Aristeas is not found entirely worthless as a source of historical knowledge. Thackeray concludes (p.XV) that 'the following statements in the letter appear deserving of credit:

- 1) The Pentateuch forms a distinct corpus within the Greek Bible: it was translated first and as a whole.
- 2) The translation was produced at Alexandria.

* S. Jellicoe suggested (J.T.S., New Series, 14, 1964) that Aristeas was addressed to the Jewish community in Alexandria at the time when Antiochus Epiphanes was advancing on Egypt, reminding them of the benefits they had received from the Ptolemies and urging them to stand steadfastly by the Law. (In a review of Lettre d'Aristée, ed. Andre Pelletier: sources Chrétiennes No. 98) But as with Acts, so with Aristeas - precise historical links are lacking.

** The whole point about the legal situation in Acts is this: does it describe the system as it was before Domitian or not?

- 3) The Greek Pentateuch goes back at least as far as the middle of the 3rd century B.C...the style is akin to that of the earlier papyri, and reflects the period of the dawn of the Koine.
- 4) It is not unlikely that the task was undertaken by a company of translators, though the traditional number (seventy or seventy two) is certainly legendary.
- 5) The Hebrew rolls were not improbably imported from Palestine.
- 6) Possibly Philadelphus, the patron of literature, with his 'known tastes and syncretistic temperament' (Swete) may have countenanced the work.'

But there can be no doubt that the main details of the story are fictitious. Demetrius of Phalerum was not the king's librarian and the style of the LXX is too popular for a work produced under royal patronage. "Dr. Swete acutely observes that Aristeas, in relating that the translation was read to and welcomed by the Jewish community before being presented to the king, (Swete p.308ff) unconsciously betrays its origin. It was produced...to meet their own needs by the large Greek-speaking Jewish colony at Alexandria!"*

Thus the letter of Aristeas turns out to be a

* Thackeray p XVI.

fictional work, intended to glorify the institutions of the Jewish faith and to commend that faith to interested Gentiles.* For such we imagine, was the readership the author aimed at. Comparison with Acts shows that the latter work is far superior both as history and as literature. The concluding address of Philocrates is somewhat lame: 'I shall moreover attempt to put on record whatever else is worthy of narration, that by the perusal thereof thou mayest win the fairest reward for thy zealous desire.' Moreover the tale he tells has a decidedly weak plot: The translation is called for, the translators are selected, the work is done and the translators go home. All the characters in the story are blanks, and the author fills in his account with 'padding' - the edifying description of Palestine and the eulogy by Eleazar of the Jewish law, and the dialogue between the translators and the king at the great banquet. Maybe, however, the author regarded the 'padding' as the main part of his message. Thackeray quotes Prof. Andrews: 'It is not too much to say that the writer's

* Jellicoe quotes with approval the statement that 'Aristeas is not claiming to write history'. (JTS vol 14, p 109) But it was precisely as history that his work was accepted for many centuries.

one object is to demonstrate the supremacy of the Jewish people - the Jewish priesthood, the Jewish law, the Jewish philosophy and the Jewish Bible.'*

Thus far Johannes Munck is right. There can be no comparison between Aristeas and the Book of Acts as historical works. 'When Luke's work is compared with Aristeas, the difference between an account of events and an edifying story is clearly seen.' (In the former) 'the historical events related may be influenced by the author's purpose in writing his work: but on the whole they bear the stamp of reality which is the mark of history, rather than a historical novel.'

Certainly, if Aristeas is taken as an example of an 'edifying' author, then Acts is in a different class entirely! on the other hand, if the claim of Judaism and Christianity to be historical religions means anything at all, truth ought in the last resort to be more edifying than fiction! We have no means of knowing to what extent the author of Aristeas really believed the story he told - that Ptolemy Philadelphus ordered the Greek translation of the law of Moses on the advice of Demetrius of Phalerum. The device of pseudepigraphy, however, which gained him so much

* Thackeray p. X.

influence in the ancient world, did not save him from discredit in the long run. He shares with the author of Luke-Acts a common missionary purpose, if on behalf of another faith, but he lacked the serious commitment to fact which is the strength of the latter.

Two questions of continuing worth are raised by the comparison of Acts and Aristeas: Firstly, did their respective authors have first-hand knowledge of Palestine? Opposing answers have been given in both cases. Secondly, to what extent does accurate local colour vindicate an author's claim to integrity and veracity? The 'Local colour' element in Aristeas seems to point to a Jew of the second century B.C. Does that of Luke indicate a companion of Paul, who shared the shipwreck on Malta and wrote his two-volume work as a historical labour of love? Or could it be equally well ascribed to an author of the second generation?

THE BOOKS OF MACCABEES

Johannes Munck maintained that it was wrong to regard Acts as an 'Erbauungsbuch' or 'edifying story'. To show this, one had only to look at other 'historical' material demonstrating the inventive narrative technique of an edifying author of that time. As examples of 'edifying miracle stories... preserved within Greek-speaking Jewry' he mentioned the letter of Aristeeas and 3 Maccabees. It may be worthwhile to follow up this hint and consider the books of Maccabees in relation to those of the author to Theophilus.

The four books of Maccabees (traditionally so-called) seem to be correctly numbered in descending order of historical reliability. 1 Macc. is a well written account of the holy war of liberation fought by the Jews against the House of Seleucus. On all sides it is highly regarded as a piece of historical writing. W.O.E. Oesterley's verdict may be taken as typical: 'The narrative is written in a simple

straightforward manner...the reader's interest is engaged throughout...the author writes as an historian, whose duty it is to record the facts without colouring them with personal observations: he is impartial, but this does not prevent him from bursting out into a poetic strain.*...From the religious standpoint..the most striking characteristics here are:-

- 1) That the direct divine intervention in the nations affairs is not nearly so prominently expressed as in the Books of the Old Testament.
- 2) That God is not mentioned by name in the whole book.

The writer is far from being wanting in religious belief and feeling; his conviction of the existence of an all-seeing providence who helps those who are worthy comes out strongly...but he evidently had an almost equally strong belief in the truth expressed in the modern proverb, that God helps those who help themselves! This very sensible religious attitude,

* Here is a point of contact with the praise-poems of Luke 1-2, though those of 1 Macc are mostly psalms of lamentation: e.g. 1 Maccl; 25-28, 37-40. 'Impartial' seems an odd word to describe an author so wholly committed to one side of the question!

which is as far removed* from scepticism as it is from fatalism, fully corresponds to the writer's sober impartiality as a historian. The author is thought to have been a Palestinian Jew, probably a Sadducee, who wrote towards the end of the first century B.C. His Sadducean position seems to be indicated by his theology of history: for the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor

* Far removed too from the attitude of Luke!

Indeed the view of the author of 1 Macc approaches that of the school of Hippocrates: ' I too take the view that these phenomena come from God, but I take the same view in regard to all phenomena and look upon no given phenomenon as more divine or more human than any other. All, in my opinion are uniform and all are divine...Natural law knows no exceptions.' (Quoted in Toynbee: Greek historical thought, p.163: Also in Hippocrates, Loeb.ed. vol.1, p 129)

angel, nor spirit.*

A strong point in favour of 1 Maccabees is its chronology: 'All the more important events are duly fixed in accordance with a definite era: namely the Seleucid era of the year 312 B.C.' So wrote Schürer, who also declared that the writer's style is the plain narrative style, being that similarly adopted in Old Testament historiography. 'The author has at his disposal such a fund of details that it is impossible to entertain any doubt as to the credibility

* With this verdict of Oesterley we may compare that of Schürer: "the standpoint of the author is that of orthodox, rigidly legal Judaism. But it is somewhat remarkable that the successes with which the Maccabean enterprises were crowned are almost nowhere attributed to any immediate supernatural intervention on the part of God, but are represented throughout as the result of the military skill and wisdom of the Maccabean Princes. Of course these Princes act always with an unshaken trust in the powerful protection and help of God. It would be a mistake to suppose that the author is not animated by a religious spirit." (Schürer Div.2, Vol 3, p 8).

The author of 1 Macc. is also generally favourable to the Hasmonaean High Priesthood.

of his narrative as a whole. 'There is no doubt that 1 Macc is a remarkable piece of work, certainly for its accuracy if not (with respect to Oesterley) for its impartiality. It was much used by Josephus, either in the Hebrew original or in our present Greek version.

For what readership was it intended? The answer can only be: for Jews. There are certainly 'good Gentiles'* in the book-like Demetrius Sidetes (16:36-40) as well as the Spartans and by a sad historical irony, the Romans! But no one, intending to persuade non-Jews to accept the faith of Israel would have begun his tale like this:

'There appeared in Israel a group of renegade Jews who incited the people: 'Let us make a covenant with the Gentiles round about...some of them in their enthusiasm went to the king and received authority to introduce non-Jewish laws and customs. They built a sports stadium in the gentile style of Jerusalem. They intermarried with Gentiles and abandoned themselves to evil ways.' (1 Macc.1;11-15, N.E.B.)

The purpose of 1 Macc was therefore to inspire

* Antiochus Epiphanes is 'that wicked man' and the hellenising Jews are 'renegades' (1 Macc 1;10-11)

Israelites by preserving an account of the winning of their national independence. It is a 'triumphalist' work by an author who was sincere in his blend of political and religious zeal. He foresaw neither the atrocities of Alexander Jannaeus nor the inevitability of Roman colonialism.

2 Macc is not, as is often supposed, a continuation of 1 Macc. It covers roughly the same ground and is a popular abridgement of a history of the Maccabees in five books by Jason of Cyrene. The latter's lost work we have no means of judging, but the author of 2 Macc tells us 'I was struck by the mass of statistics and the difficulty which the bulk of the material causes to those wishing to grasp the narrative of the history. I have tried to provide for the entertainment of those who read for pleasure, the convenience of students who must commit the facts to memory, and the profit even of the casual reader.'* Neither Jason or the author of the abridgement produced as fine a work as 1 Macc. 'There can be no doubt, 'wrote Schürer' that on the whole, the simple narrative of 1 Macc, based as it is on good narrative

* $\pi\alpha\rho\iota\ \delta\epsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\tau\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\upsilon$ 2 Macc 2;25.

It is worth noting that the general reader - that elusive figure - was believed to exist in antiquity.

sources, deserves the preference over the rhetorical narrative of the second.. the second book is very unlike the first in another respect also: It aims directly at edification by the narrative of the heroic faith of the Maccabees, and of the marvellous events by which God preserved the continuance of the Jewish religion, and worship.*

2 Macc, then, is more of an 'Erbauungsbuch' than the first book. A different attitude to the supernatural also appears: most notably when Heliodorus attempts to loot the temple treasury: "The Ruler of all Spirits. ** and powers produced a mighty apparition, so that all who had the audacity to accompany Heliodorus were faint with terror, stricken with panic at the power of God!" A horse with a rider

* Schurer p 212-213.

** 2 Macc 3:22-26 αὐτοὶ δὲ αὐτοῦ σὺν τοῖς δορυφόροις κατὰ τὸ γαβροφύλακειον ἤδη παρόντος, ὁ τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης ἐξουσίας δυνάστης ἐπιφανείαν μεγάλην ἐποίησεν, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατατολμήσαντας συνελθεῖν, καταπλάγυνται τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμιν εἰς ἐκλυσιν καὶ δειλίαν τραπήναι.

The incantatory style is notable, and the motif of dumbness and the δύο νεανία have obvious parallels with the gospel tradition.

in golden armour attacked the Seleucid chief minister, and he was scourged by two young men. Struck dumb, he received back the power of speech as a result of the intercession of Onias the High Priest. Heliodorus was glad to offer a sacrifice and depart, playing a role which is familiar from many a wonder-story in

the New Testament: ἐξεμαρτύρα δὲ πᾶσιν ὅτι
 ἦν ἐπ' αὐτὸν τεθεαμένος ἔργα τοῦ μεγίστου
 Θεοῦ. (2 Macc 3;36)

How does Acts compare with the first two books of Maccabees? It might seem fair to place it somewhere between the two. There is no doubt that Acts, like 2 Macc, aims directly at edification 'Thus for example, Sergius Paulus the proconsul 'believed' - when he saw what happened to Elymas the magician - 'for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord*.' Again the people who saw the miracle at the Gate Beautiful of the temple were 'filled with wonder and amazement' (3;10 ἐπληρώθησαν θαύματος καὶ ἐκστάσεως)

* Acts 13:12. But was the proconsul converted to Christianity or only impressed? Our view is that he was not converted, and that Luke the historian, while anxious to get as much 'edification' ^{as possible} out of the incident, is careful not to claim too much. The ambiguity could be deliberate, as also perhaps in the Eutychus incident.

On the other hand, leaving aside any philosophical discussion of miracle, the signs and wonders of 2 Macc are of a kind familiar in popular folklore. Thus when Epiphanes undertook his second invasion of Egypt 'apparitions were seen in the sky all over Jerusalem for nearly forty days: galloping horsemen in golden armour, companies of spearmen standing to arms, swords unsheathed; cavalry divisions in battle order. Charges and Counter-charges were made on each side, shields were shaken,...breast plates and golden ornaments of every kind shone brightly.' Not surprisingly "all men prayed that this apparition might portend good." (2 Macc 5:1-4) Here, as in the Heliodorus incident, the supernatural is 'materialised' in such detail as must have aroused some doubts even in the minds of some ancient readers.

Another key passage in 2 Macc. is the martyrdom of the seven brothers (ch 7). In this gruesome and popular incident - which was to have wide influence on Christian as well as Jewish martyr literature - there is much very circumstantial detail as to methods of torture, but little as to names, places and dates. The story is clearly one in which folklore motifs are prominent, as is that of the heroism of the 'good old priest' Eleazar which precedes it. Our conclusion is that we have heard a folk memory

of the horrors of the Seleucid persecution: a stylised edifying tale which bears only the most general similarity to what actually happened.

Two other points of resemblance are worth noting; 1) Antiochus Epiphanes dies the proper death of a persecutor - he is eaten by worms; which process the author describes with relish ('the whole army was disgusted by the stench of his decay') (2 Macc 9:9). There is an obvious parallel with the Lucan account of the death of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12;20-24) but the Lucan account is very restrained in comparison. Is it unfair to conclude that Luke - whether a physician or not - did not find pain and physical suffering an 'edifying' subject, even when it happened to 'bad people'? Those awful warnings, Ananias and Sapphira die instantaneously($\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\chi\rho\eta\mu\alpha$ Acts 5;10).*

* A closer parallel with the death of Epiphanes is the ghastly end of the persecuting Emperor Galerius as described by Lactantius in 'de Morte persecutorum'. Both tyrants are eaten by worms and both are forced to recant and confess the power of God, before the end. It is worth noting too that the letter quoted in 2 Macc 9,19-20, in which Antiochus commends his son and heir to the (Hellenistic?) Jews in Jerusalem, was defended as historical by Edwyn Bevan (The House of Seleucus, II,177) on the grounds of its neutral style. R.H.Charles commented: 'Its very discrepancies with the present setting tell in favour of the hypothesis that it represents some independent document.' (Charles, Apoc, pl44)

A second parallel with Acts is found in the vision seen by Judas Maccabaeus before the decisive battle with Nicanor: "The former High Priest Onias appeared to him - that great gentleman of modest bearing and mild disposition, an exponent from childhood of the good life. With outstretched hands he was praying earnestly for the whole Jewish community. Next there appeared in the same attitude a figure of great age and dignity, whose wonderful air of authority marked him as a man of the utmost distinction. Then Onias said 'This is God's prophet Jeremiah, who loves his fellow Jews and offers many prayers for our people and the Holy City.' Jeremiah extended his right hand and delivered to Judas a golden sword, saying, 'Take this holy sword, the gift of God, and with it crush your enemies.'" This remarkable experience was described - either by Judas Maccabaeus, or by Jason of Cyrene, or by the author of the abridgement - as 'a trustworthy dream, a sort of waking vision' (2Macc 15;11).*

* 'ὄνειρον ἀξιοπιστον ὑπάρ τι

the force of 'ὑπάρ' is to affirm the veridical nature of the event. The NEB with its reference to 'a vision of a waking dream' has a happy reminiscence of Keats : Ode to a Grecian urn!

Parallels with the Lucan writings occur to mind: there is the transfiguration narrative (Luke 9:28-37) the vision of the man from Macedonia (Acts 16;9) Paul's trance - ^{or} ~~ekstasis~~ - in the temple, and his call to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17 - 21) as well as his vision of the angel during the storm at sea (Acts 21;23) which helped to inspire passengers and crew in much the same way as Jeremiah inspired Judas and the Jews. *

There would also seem to be a definite resemblance between Luke and the author of 2 Macc (or Jason of Cyrene?) in their apprehension and presentation of religious experience and the supernatural. It is fair to claim, however, that Luke is the more restrained of the two. He presents no

* It is odd that the non-violent Jeremiah, whose theology had little to do with that of the Hasmonaeans, should have appeared in the vision.

'Isaiah of Jerusalem or even Nahum might seem much more appropriate! The 'golden' sword may be ascribed to the author, for gold frequently appears in his presentation of the supernatural.

heavenly horsemen in golden armour!* If he is less profound than Paul, who thought there was nothing to be gained by discussing vision and revelations of the Lord,** he is more credible in his description of mystical and spiritual awareness than was the author of 2 Macc. Perhaps those who undertood the least about it, wrote the most about it.

If 2 Macc pays more attention to edification than to accuracy, the Epitomist's modest disclaimer may be taken into account as a plea in extenuation:

* Unless we adopt a 'secular' viewpoint and consider all religious experience as illusory, we need not deny that genuine intuitions were alluded to by Paul, Luke, Jason and the epitomist. The angelic visitant is but the form-vision as well as the audition - in which the ancient world sought to clothe the ineffable. This will not seem strange to societies outside the west: 'A Congo pastor made a useful distinction: there are two kinds of dreams: first, dreams about things and conditions of which the author has prior knowledge; secondly, exceptional dreams, about things and conditions on which he has no knowledge. The latter are inspired by God' (B. Sundkler: The Christian Ministry in Africa; p24)

** 2 Cor 12; 1-5.

'If it is found well-written and aptly composed, that is what I myself hoped for; if cheap and mediocre, I could only do my best; for just as it is disagreeable to drink wine alone or water alone, whereas the mixing of the two gives a pleasant and a delightful taste, so too variety in style in a literary work charms the ear of the reader. Let this be my final word.' (2 Macc 15:38-39)

Our author has certainly mixed wine and water in the matter of his style* - here again Luke showed himself the better man, with his classical prologue and Biblical nativity story - but what of his history? The verdict of Oesterley is relevant to the study of Acts in particular: 'The sources (i.e. especially Jason) used by the epitomist, evince a knowledge which is hardly likely to have been possessed by a Jewish writer after the second century B.C. There are vivid touches which are more than circumstantial, and

* His mixture did not please Edwyn Bevan, who wrote of 'that stifled literary jargon, which was the curse of third-rate authors in the Hellenistic world: but if you can penetrate through this repellant medium, you can still touch an anguish that was once real and quivering.' This was Bevan's verdict on the martyrdom of the seven brothers. (Jerusalem under the High Priests p 83).

independent notices which point upon the whole to the information of eyewitnesses and contemporaries behind some of Jason's narratives. Upon the other hand 2 Maccabees exaggerates numbers generally, and horrors invariably, ... the epitomist, in fact, has the artistic temperament as well as the pious aim of edification: on both grounds he is naturally careless of the exact accuracy which an historian pursues, and satisfied if he can produce his effects in a picturesque manner.*

Could the same verdict be passed on Luke? He certainly does not exaggerate horrors, and is not too wild about numbers.** He likes picturesque and interesting anecdotes; he clearly aims to edify and he has an artistic temperament. But is he 'careless of exact accuracy'? More careful, in our opinion, than was the epitomist, if not as careful as modern historical scholarship would require. If the work of Jason of Cyrene had survived, we could compare it with 2 Maccabees in much the same way as Mark can be compared with Luke. But, as Moffatt noted, the method

* Apoc. ed Charles p.128 - 129.

** In Acts 21:28 he gives the Egyptian 4000 dissident followers, as against the 30,000 allowed by Josephus: (B.J.ii:13:4). Bruce (p308) suggests that \triangle = 4000 could be confused with \wedge = 30,000.

of the epitomist seems to have been different: 'He must have omitted large sections of Jason's treatise and summarised even what he took over, but instead of preserving either the language or the shape of his selections, he embellished the former to suit the popular taste and enlarged the latter, for the sake of edification, with pious amplifications of the miraculous element.'* He was essentially a populariser, who intruded his own personality into his narrative in a way which Luke avoids even in his preface. His intention must have been to edify Hellenistic Jews!: 'I beg my readers not to be disheartened by these calamities...the Lord does not deal with us as he deals with other nations...though he disciplines his people by calamity, he never deserts them.' (2 Macc 6: 12,15,16) This is popular Jewish salvation-history (Heilsgeschichte) and at no very profound or original level.

* Moffatt writes further (Charles p 125) 'Upon the whole, the materials, the contents and the style of the book answer fairly well to the writer's account of his own method and aims (2 Macc.2:19-31,6:12-17, 15:37-49).'

3. MACCABEES:

Although 3 Macc. is included in Charles' great collection among the 'Historical Books', one feels that it was fortunate to escape relegation to the lower division: "Quasi-historical books written with a moral purpose," which consists of 'Tobit' and 'Judith'. The plot of 3 Maccabees may be summarised thus:

1: Ptolemy IV Philopator wins the battle of Raphia against Antiochus the Great (217 B.C.) On his march after the battle he visits Jerusalem and wishes to enter the temple. He is prevented by Jewish opposition and divine intervention, and leaves in a rage.(1-2:24).

2: He tried to force the Jews to renounce their religion, and orders that all Jews should be sent to Alexandria as prisoners, where they are to be confined in the hippodrome.(2:25-421) Attempted registration of all Jews is, however, a failure: 'This was the working of the invincible providence of him who was aiding the Jews from heaven.'

3: Hermon the royal elephant-master is ordered to drug the elephants so that they will trample all the Jews to death. After various delays the elephants and the royal army enter the stadium. An old Jewish Priest named Eleazar (again!) prays eloquently for deliverance. 'The greatly glorious, almighty and true God, making

manifest his holy face, opened the gates of heaven, from which two angels of holy aspect descended, invisible to all but the Jews, and filled the army of the adversaries with confusion!' The elephants began to trample on the royal army instead of the Jews (5:1-6:21).

4: The king repents of his wicked plan. He organises a banquet for the Jews, and decrees that in future they should receive privileged treatment. The Jews further request that renegades from their own people should be put to death: "On that day they slew over three hundred men, and they kept it as a joyful festival, having destroyed the impious"(7:15)'And they recovered the whole of their property according to the registration, so that those who held it returned it with great fear, the great God having perfectly wrought great things for their salvation'(7:22)

Clearly 3 Maccabees, (6:22-7:23) as a piece of Jewish salvation-history, contains much more salvation than history. Since this work, together with Aristeas, was selected by Johannes Munck as an example of an 'edifying story' to contrast with the 'historical book of Acts', it is worth enquiring what facts, if any, may lie behind it.

Obviously any really historical events lie quite far behind the account given in 3 Maccabees as we now have it. The most exciting episode - the attempted use

of drunken elephants to exterminate the Jews-can be paralleled in Josephus. According to him, another Ptolemy, Physcon (146-117 B.C.) was responsible. "God gave a remarkable attestation of his righteous procedure: for when Ptolemy Physcon had the presumption to fight against Ohias' army, and had caught all the Jews who were in that city (Alexandria) with their children and wives, and had exposed them naked and in bonds to his elephants, that they might be trodden underfoot and destroyed, and when they had made the elephants drunk for that purpose, the event proved contrary to their expectations: for those elephants left the Jews who were exposed to them and fell violently on Physcon's friends, and slew a great number of them; nay, after this Ptolemy saw a terrible ghost, which prohibited his hurting those men... when it is well known that the Alexandrian Jews do with good reason celebrate this day!*

The style of Josephus is deplorably verbose, but his version of the elephant-story seems much less unlikely than the one given in 3 Maccabees, and its persistence in popular folk-lore suggest that it may well have been founded in fact. But which Ptolemy was guilty of attempted genocide? Emmet concluded that the

* Contra Apion 2:5.

elephant incident probably took place when Josephus says it did - during the reign of Physcon - while it is quite likely that Philopator would have attempted to enter the temple in his triumphal progress after the battle of Raphia: "his superstitious fears may well have worked on him in some such manner as to give rise to the highly coloured narrative of our book."*

* 'The God who beholds all, the father of all holy among the holy ones, scourged him who was greatly uplifted in violence and insolence, shaking him to and fro as a reed by the wind, so that lying on the ground powerless and paralysed in body he could not so much as speak, being smitten by a righteous judgement.' (3 Macc 2:21) Emmet compares this with the repulse of Heliodorus in 2 Macc 3:22-30, 'where the resemblance in language is great', and the punishment of Antiochus in 2 Macc.9:4, While the correspondence in language is certainly close, the theology is quite different. For instead of the very splendid angels who chastise Heliodorus in 2 Macc, we are presented with a tyrant shaken by the power of God - a phenomenon much less difficult to 'psychologise'-if 'psychologising' be permitted. As Emmet notes: apart from the 'two glorious angels' who repulse the elephants at 6:18, 'there are no other references to angels in the book,...the writer did not belong to the school which delighted in them, and he makes as little of their appearance as he can.' (Charles p 171) Here he certainly differed from Luke, who often explained religious phenomena in terms of angelic appearances.

The suggestion is then made that in 3 Macc. two stories have been combined: firstly the attempt to enter the temple made by Philadelphus, and secondly the projected genocide by drunken elephants which took place probably under Physcon. 'It is at any rate clear that the aim of the writer was to combine in a single picture as many features as possible, all tending to the glorification of the faithful Jew. We have thus brought together in a single canvas the frustrated attempt to enter the temple, the saving of the king's life by a Jew, the attacks on religion and the attempts to Hellenise, affecting both the Jews in Alexandria and in Egypt as a whole, the testimonies of their great influence and unswerving loyalty, the marvels of divine intervention and the vengeance on renegades.. each feature taken by itself and stripped of its sensational colouring, is entirely credible and probably has some foundation in fact...the papyri confirm in various ways the general accuracy of the writer and we shall probably be justified in giving his work a somewhat higher historical value than has previously been assigned to it!*

Such was the verdict of Emmet. Yet 3 Macc can only be assigned 'historical value' in the sense that

* Charles p.161.

it records incidents which probably happened somewhere at some time. It is certainly an 'edifying tale' in the sense defined by Johannes Munck. Once again it would seem that the intended readership must have been Hellenistic Jews; one cannot imagine many thoughtful Gentiles or 'God-fearers' being attracted by the narrow religious nationalism of 3 Macc. Genuine anguish is heard in the story of the projected massacre of the Jews, but it is emotion recollected in tranquillity if not in self-satisfaction, and the book would seem to date from a time when the Jewish position was relatively secure.*

Comparison with Acts soon shows that we are dealing with two kinds of writing. In 3 Macc the margin of error recalls that of radio-carbon dating - plus or minus a century or more. In Acts the chronology, if not strictly exact, is precise enough to provide material for scholarly debate. The famine occurred 'under Claudius' (11;28) who also expelled the Jews from Rome (18;2); Paul was in Corinth when Gallio was proconsul of Achaëa (18;12). Harnack considered that 'the names are mentioned in the natural course of the narrative; there is nothing that is intentionally chronological.' If this is correct it still shows that Luke was a writer who related his narrative naturally to contemporary events: the author of 3 Macc-

* see page 508 Additional note 1.

-abees certainly was not.*

Like 2 Macc and Aristeas, 3 Macc offers correct local colour in so far as it can be checked from the papyri. The phrase in Ptolemy's letter: 'χαίρειν καὶ εὐφρανέσθαι' 3;12 seems to 'point to a date at the end of the second or the beginning of the third century B.C.'** So does the use of Egyptian months, noticeable at 6;38: these occur already during the reign of Ptolemy Physcon.***

As with 2 Maccabees, the coincidence between our book and the papyri implies that the author wrote in Egypt in the first century B.C. It cannot, of course, guarantee the historicity of his narrative as such.

Our conclusion must be that there is less to compare and more to contrast between Acts and 3 Maccabees. Both are, in a sense, essays in theocratic history, (one Jewish and the other Christian), and both celebrate the working of God in judgement and deliverance. But the crudity and fictional nature of 3 Macc is well illustrated in the incident where the

* Acts of the Apostles: (Harnack) p.5. Chapter 1 gives a very handy summary of the chronological data in Acts.

** Thackeray, quoted by Charles, Vol p.157.

*** Charles p.158

compulsory registration of the Jews comes to a halt.¹¹ After the king had threatened them fiercely, as having been bribed to contrive their escape, he was at length clearly convinced on that point, when they told him and proved that the paper manufactory and the pens which they used for writing had already given out. But this was the working of the invincible providence of him who was aiding the Jews from heaven.' (4:20-21)

Johannes Munck was certainly right to argue that Acts was not 'an edifying story' like 3 Maccabees or Aristeeas. For in these works edification has overcome history. In Acts, on the other hand, the author is concerned to recount what, in his own opinion, or according to his own presuppositions, actually took place. 'The historical events may be influenced by the author's purpose in writing his work; but on the whole they bear the stamp of reality which is the property of history rather than of the historical novel.'^{*} In other words, in the Lucan writings, dogma

* Acts (Munck) p XLI.

has not overcome history.*

(A note on 4 Maccabees):

The fourth book of Maccabees covers much the same ground as the other three. It is however, 'a sermon or homily, which enlists the Stoic virtues in the cause of Jewish orthodoxy'**. The writer aims to show the power of inspired 'reason' over the passions, and he takes as his grand example, Eleazar, the seven brothers, and their mother, who were martyred by Antiochus Epiphanes. His work offers no extra historical information, and is of interest chiefly because of its influence on Christian Martyrology. The Greek fathers

* 'Dogma must overcome history' was the notorious epigram attributed to Cardinal Manning at the time of the second Vatican Council of 1870. The relation between dogma and history is of course, the great conundrum of the four gospels. It is worth remembering, with due respect to redaction critics, that they are not the only documents, ancient and modern, to be influenced by some kind of ideology. Nor do we wish to claim that Luke was that impossible figure - the completely impartial writer. One suspects in particular that in his guarded reference to the great collection ('I came to my people bringing alms and offerings') there is more than meets the eye. See Chapter 9.

** R.B.Townshend in Charles II, p 653.

were proud to see in the Maccabean martyrs true athletes of the spirit. Chrysostom advised his hearers to 'engrave their contests and their struggles on your heart as on a tablet,'* and Erasmus wrote an inaccurate paraphrase of their story, which got him into very hot water indeed.**

The other point is that the author admires the Maccabean martyrs and not the Maccabean conquerors. His was a quietist theology, and the values he stood for did far more to preserve Judaism for the ages to come than did those of Josephus and Simon bar Giora.)

* Charles II p 660.

** Charles II p 660 - 661.

PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA: IN FLACCUM.

To the student of Christian origins the writings of Philo present many points of interest. Not only does the theology of the Jewish leader offer a possible point of contact with early Christian belief, but his methods of Biblical exegesis are also relevant to the historian of Christianity. Our concern here is with his extant 'historical' writings, in which he throws a brilliant light on the history of the turbulent times in which he lived. There are the 'Embassy to Gaius' and 'In Flaccum'. (Against Flaccus)

Here we meet several of the characters who play an important part in the New Testament story: Pontius Pilate, for example, 'a man of inflexible, stubborn and cruel disposition', outraged Jewish opinion by setting up 'gilded shields in Herod's palace in the Holy City.' King Agrippa I also appears, and plays a crucial role in the story told in the 'Embassy'. In 'Against Flaccus' there occurs the strange Carabas incident, in which the Alexandrian mob salute a mental-defective as king - using the Aramaic title 'Marin' (Lord) - in order to insult Agrippa and the Alexandrian Jews. This episode, with its weird resemblance to the mockery of Jesus and possible link between Barabbas and Carabas, excited the myth-hunting curiosity of Sir James Frazer in 'the Golden Bough' - though he was careful

to note that any link was 'highly speculative'.*

The interpretation of Philo and his writings presents many problems similar to those which are found in studying the New Testament documents. Thus critics are not agreed as to the precise purpose and original form of the 'Embassy' and 'In Flaccum'. The latter work describes the career and deserved downfall of Aulus Avillius Flaccus, prefect of Alexandria and Egypt, who 'went to the bad' after the accession of the Emperor Gaius. Siding with the anti-Semitic Alexandrian Greeks, he allowed them to launch a great pogrom against the Jews. This cruelty did not save Flaccus, however, for he was deposed, banished to an island, and finally put to death.

The 'Embassy' describes the megalomania of the

* Prof D.E.Nineham writes, in his commentary on Mark: "Such an attitude of suspended judgement seems preferable to that of most recent commentators who dismiss the parallels as pure coincidence, or as at most suggesting that 'the mock homage...may have been determined by some hazy notion of imitating a bit of pagan ritual.' The parallels are more striking than he (Moffat) allows...but (Mark) was no doubt quite unaware of any such pagan parallels..." So it seems, was Philo, who could have scored points by pointing them out.

Emperor Gaius (Caligula) and his attempt to place a statue of himself in the temple at Jerusalem. Its main topic, however, is a description of the fortunes of a delegation of Alexandrian Jews, led by Philo himself, who went to Rome to plead their cause before the Emperor. A rival delegation of Greeks went also, and Philo describes in graphic detail how his delegation danced attendance at the heels of Gaius, while the latter inspected building operations, and asked irrelevant questions such as: 'Why do you Jews not eat pork?' On one occasion the blasphemer dared to pronounce the unspeakable Name of God Himself.

According to Eusebius* Philo related in 5 books what has happened to the Jews in the time of Gaius.' There is some doubt, however, as to what connection existed between the five books and his extant writings as we now have them. Schürer suggested that the 'In Flaccum' was book three, and the 'Embassy' book four of the series. On the other hand Colson conjectured that the 'Embassy' itself, divided into five, represented the five books. On all this E.M.Smallwood comments: 'The problem of the structure

* H.E. 2:5:1.

of Philo's historical works and his 'five' books is one for which a certain solution is probably unattainable.'*

Philo's ability as an historian was thus estimated by H. Idris Bell in his preface to the edition of 'In Flaccum' published by H.Box.

'Though an experienced writer, Philo was by no means a good historian: indeed he hardly claimed to be so. He was writing not so much a history in the proper sense as an exemplary or didactic treatise designed to illustrate, for Jew and Gentile alike God's mercies towards his people and the retribution which, sooner or later, was bound to fall upon their enemies. Hence such considerations as the clear arrangement of his material, strict observance of chronology, the impartial chronicling of events whether favourable or unfavourable to the Jews, did not enter his scheme.'** If his narrative is to yield its full value for historical knowledge, some interpretation, some reconstruction is necessary: isolated details must be mutually related, single events be set in their context.'

This paragraph is obviously of much interest to

* Legatio ed. E.M. Smallwood, p37 - 43.

** Box p viii.

the student of Acts. For 'Philo' read 'Luke' and for 'Jews' read 'Christians'! 'Not so much a history as an exemplary or didactic treatise' is a good definition of Acts as understood by Haenchen, for example: he sees it as primarily an 'Erbauungsbuch' designed to uplift and edify believers. So it may be worthwhile to compare 'In Flaccum' with the Book of Acts. One curious feature is that both books end with a sea voyage involving a prisoner.

Much of the speculation about Philo's work closely parallels some of the speculations about Acts: E.R. Goodenough, for example, thinks that 'In Flaccum' was written as an 'awful warning' and presented to the Prefect who succeeded Flaccus by Philo himself. The 'Embassy' on the other hand, was composed for the edification of no less a person than Emperor Claudius! The former 'is full of suggestions for the proper conduct of the Prefect's office, as well as warnings for one who would abuse his privileges. The same is true of Legatio for the Emperor.'* A suggestion like this recalls the idea favoured by Streeter - that Acts was written specifically as part of the defender's brief for use at the trial of Paul.

* The politics of Philo Judaeus: E.R. Goodenough; p19.

A further possible parallel with Paul may be found in our estimate of the character of Philo. The popular impression of the Alexandrian Jew is that he was a dreamer of dreams, so wrapped in heavenly allegorisings that he was 'no earthly good'. 'Not so, declares Goodenough!' In Rome the embassy had to trail the mad emperor month after month, stomaching his gibes, holding their peace and keeping their dignity in the face of unceasing abuse and insult...Eventually he accomplished the impossible: he won from Gaius a niggardly toleration for the Jews: the most remarkable part of this story is the sequel: the man who had this commission is now universally represented as one so wrapt up in metaphysics that he had no practical sense or interest. This extraordinary verdict of Philo, in spite of the character he showed in the one incident we have from his life, has been built up from the impression of his writings. For his treatises have relatively little to do with social matters.'

Again one thinks of Paul; do we build up our picture of him from his letters alone - as John Knox might seem to suggest? An analogous question would apply to St. Patrick: How do we relate his extant

writings - the Confession, the Breastplate, the letter to the soldiers of Corinthus - to the other traditions about him and the 'definitive version' of his life which the Monk Murchu produced? Goodenough certainly shows that a one-sided view of Philo is obtained by studying his theological works in isolation - but the 'Embassy' and 'In Flaccum', are after all, still writings of Philo himself. What is the testimony of Acts worth, as compared with that of the Pauline letters? And what conclusion can we come to about men like Stephen, from whom we have no personal testimony, no 'letter to Corinthus' but only the baffling and seemingly ambiguous account of Acts itself?

All these speculations and comparisons may seem rather irrelevant, but we contend that Biblical studies can suffer if carried on in too great isolation from other fields of historical enquiry. Those who feel that Luke the historian lacks objectivity should try listening to some of the government-controlled radio stations of the twentieth century, or indeed, meditating on much 'missionary literature' produced by Christian churches!*

Objectivity is certainly not the strong point of the

* We are not of course claiming that Luke had no axes to grind.

'In Flaccum'. Philo begins 'in medias res' - though no doubt this is an accident in the preservation of the text - with the statement: 'Δεύτερος μετὰ Σηιάνου φλάκκος Ἀουλίλιος διαδέχεται τὴν κατὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐπιβουλήν.'

Flaccus appears as an anti-Semitic character, intent upon evil. Yet Philo begins by conceding that his rule began quite well. 'He decided suits of importance with the magistrates...put down the overproud...and dissolved the associations and guilds which were continually holding feasts on the pretence of insobriety.' The guilds were the political clubs of the Alexandrian Greeks, and Philo praises Flaccus for his impartiality when he is being drastic with the other side. The impartial man, as usual, turns out to be the man I agree with.

The deterioration of Flaccus, according to Philo, began after the accession of the Emperor Gaius. Flaccus had 'backed the wrong horse' in Rome, and when his Patron Macro fell, he began to favour the Greek faction in Alexandria. The latter (claims Philo) informed him that the new emperor was strongly pro-Greek, and that only the city of Alexandria stood between him and destruction. Flaccus then began to display anti-Jewish bias, and the spark that caused the great explosion was the ~~Cam~~bas incident.

Herod Agrippa I tactlessly landed in Alexandria with an ostentatious bodyguard, and the Greek mob, disgusted at this, dressed up a mental defective as a king, greeting him as 'Marin' - Lord: Philo calls this a *βοή τις ἰστοῦτος* ; they then held a mass meeting in the theatre and called on Flaccus to demonstrate his loyalty by setting up statues of Caesar(*εἰκόνας ἀνατιθέναι*) in the Jewish houses of prayer.

Once we allow for the emotive and one-sided language used by Philo (Flaccus is a rascally megalomaniac - *ὁ δοξομανὴς καὶ παλὶμπερατός*) we have a scene closely resembling the one at Ephesus recorded in Acts 19. *συρρυσέντες εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἐξ εὐθινοῦ φλάκιον ἥδη τιμῶν ἁθλίων ἐωνημένοι ... ἀνεβόησαν ἀφ' ἑνὸς συνθήματος ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς εἰκόνας ἀνατιθέναι.*

Thus did the Alexandrian mob, whom Philo distinguishes from the sober citizens - *ὁ καθεστὼς καὶ δημοτικός* while at Ephesus *ἐπλήσθη ἡ πόλις τῆς συγκύσεως, ὡρμησάν τε ὑποθυμαδὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον.*

Anti-Jewish feeling appears here as well: 'When they learnt that Alexander was a Jew: ' *φωνὴ ἐγένετο μία ἐκ πάντων, ὡς ἐπὶ ὥρας δύο κραζόντων, Μεχάλῃ ἡ Ἄρτεμις Εφεσίων.*

The parallel with Acts is close, and while we may be grateful that the great race-riot which followed has no parallel in the New Testament, there are several points where Philo's account shows interesting points of contact.* Not only the fact, but the method of corporal punishment is important: 'It has been the custom for the Egyptians to be beaten with one kind of scourge and by one kind of executioner, and for the Alexandrines to be beaten with blades and by the Alexandrian blade-bearers.'**

This custom the deplorable Flaccus chose to ignore, with less wisdom than Claudius Lysias the tribune, who 'was afraid' for 'he realised that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had bound him.'***

Philo makes no attempt to conceal his partiality: he heaps on the Alexandrian leaders Isidore and Lampo, all kinds of epithets, which indeed they may

* Perhaps the most striking coincidence is at 84: 'I have known cases before now of persons who had been impaled, when a holiday of this kind was at hand, being taken down and given to their relatives to enjoy the honour of sepulture and the customary rites.' Presumably he had not heard of the fairly recent case of Jesus of Nazareth?

** Box p 78.

*** Acts 22;29.

well have deserved. Lampo was rightly known as 'pen-butcher' (*καταμυσφάκτης*) by the people, while Philo on his own account calls the gymnasiarch Isidore *'ὁ πικρὸς σκεψάνης, δημόσιος, ταπεινός* '* Moreover he confesses that he is not writing an impartial account in any modern sense: he does not recall the misdeeds of Flaccus and the Greeks - he says - 'for the sake of old injuries,' *ἀλλὰ τελευτῶν τὴν ἔφορον τῶν ἀνθρώπων δικῆν* ' - that very Dike (justice) that was seen in operation when the snake fastened on the hand of Paul in Malta (Acts 28:3) Thus it is clear that Philo is composing an exemplary treatise or theological 'cautionary tale' on the lines of the medieval 'Fall of Princes' theme.

Two further points of comparison with Acts are worth noting.

1. The Jewish prayers of Thanksgiving.

Flaccus was, says Philo, intent on total genocide. But his arrest - wonderful coincidence - came right at the time of the feast of Tabernacles. He was taken into custody by a centurion - Bassus - sent by the emperor for the purpose. Moreover, he who had made so many homeless was himself most fittingly arrested at

* City-troubler - Philo gives this as one of the chieftancy titles of Isidore: but is it not rather a rude epithet of his own?(See Box 137)

home: ' ἔδει γὰρ αὐτῶν ἔσθαι ἄρξασθαι τὴν δίκην
κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἀνεστίουσιν οἴκους οὐδὲν
ἡδικοτέρων ἀνθρώπων ἐργασαμέναι *

At this the persecuted Jews burst out into songs of
praise which it is interesting to compare with those
of the persecuted Christians in (Acts 4:25-31)

Δέσποτα, σὺ ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ
τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ
ἐν αὐτοῖς...

The Christians in Acts pray in Old Testament
terms - here indeed we meet one of the most famous
of the alleged Aramaisms.** and the Alexandrians pray
in language essentially similar, if somewhat more
long-winded: ' οὐκ ἐφηδόμεθα..., ὦ Δέσποτα,
τιμωρίαις ἐχθροῦ, δεδωδαιγμένοι πρὸς τῶν ἱερῶν
νόμων ἀνθρωποπαθεῖν... γῆν καὶ θάλατταν
ἀέρα τε καὶ οὐρανόν, τὰ μέρη τοῦ παντός καὶ
σύμπαντα τὸν κόσμον, ὦ μέγιστε βασιλεῦ
θνητῶν καὶ ἀθανάτων, παρακαλέσοντας εἰς
εὐχαριστίαν τὴν σὴν ἡγομεν

Both prayers are composed in a reverberating and
liturgical style, but the Christians in Acts keep
close to the letter of the Old Testament. Haenchen

* Box p.115

** ὁ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος Ἁγίου
στόματος Δαβὶδ παιδὸς σου εἰπὼν

suggests* that Luke would have been familiar with communal prayers, repeated aloud, from the liturgical practice of his own time: but he could equally well have found it in Philo's Alexandria.

2. The Sea Voyage.

The most interesting parallel between Acts and In Flaccum is found in the accounts of the journeys of the two prisoners: Flaccus and Paul.

Arrested by the centurion Bassus, Flaccus was transported to Rome at the beginning of the winter- *ἐρχομένου χειμῶνος* - 'for he must needs taste the terrors of the sea too, who had filled the elements of the universe with transgressions'. Throughout the last section of his work Philo is 'piling on the agony' to show the end of the persecutor in its most gruesome light. Luke's motive is precisely the opposite; to show Paul acting 'quite openly and unhindered' (Acts 28:3) How far have the two writers departed from what actually happened?

Blow follows blow upon the unhappy Flaccus, for the two agitators, Isidore and Lampo, arrive in Rome to give evidence against him. Then there follows 'an abundant crop of disasters'. The ex-governor's property is confiscated - 'save for some few things' -

* H.p.184.

and he is sentenced to banishment in the wretched island of Gyara - a punishment which is commuted, on the intercession of M. Aemilius Lepidus, to that of 'relegatio' to the only slightly less uncomfortable island of Andros.

We may presume that Philo is sticking fairly close to the facts here. He does not omit two details - that not all the property of Flaccus was forfeited and that his sentence was partly commuted - even though they do not fit in with his theological scheme of crime and punishment. But on the voyage to Andros he is able to exhibit the wretched Flaccus in real trouble: 'The historicity of the narrative in detail' - wrote Box - 'is thoroughly suspicious. "We are justified in concluding that Philo ascertained the general circumstances of the exile's habit of life and that upon some foundation of fact he built an edifice of psychological inference."*

'After he had crossed the Ionian gulf he sailed the sea as far as Corinth, a spectacle to the coastal towns of the Peloponnese...and after the crossing the Isthmus from Lechaëum to the opposite sea, and going down to Cenchreae, he was compelled by his warders, who conceded not the smallest respite(*ἐν τῇ ἐλαττοτάτῃ*)

* Box xlviii.

(ἡντινοῦν ἐνδύοντων) to embark at once on a small merchantman (βραχέως ὀλιγῶδες) and put to sea.

Contrast the treatment given to Paul: when they got to Sidon, the centurion Julius φιλαυθρώπως τε... τῷ Παύλῳ χρησάμενος ἐπέτρεψε πρὸς τοὺς φίλους πορευθέντα ἐπιμελείας τυχεῖν' 'Acts 27:3

Paul was granted the very privilege that Flaccus was denied!

Both prisoners met with danger and contrary winds, but the account in Acts gives a much more precisely detailed itinerary.* Of Flaccus we are told, vaguely, that "he then crosses the islands that come one after another: Helene, Cos, Cynthus and the rest ...as far as that which was to come last, the island of the Andrians, "On all this Box commented:** "The language used of the journey from Attica to Andros is certainly inaccurate...the suspicion is aroused that the journey is prolonged in order to exhibit Flaccus to as many places as possible...Two definite

* e.g. Caesarea-Sidon (next day) Myra- (slow progress for a number of days) Fair Havens(many days lost-the Fast already past) attempt to reach Phoenix (14 nights at sea) Acts 27:1-17.

** Box xlvll (m,5)

inconsistencies add to this suspicion: In sec.154 Flaccus is an object of curiosity to the coastal towns of the Peloponnese as far as Corinth...and in Sec.156 he coasts along Attica to Cape Sirmium, yet in sec.173 he is made to exclaim: 'I was led in procession through all Italy as far as Brundisium and through all Peloponnese as far as Corinth and through Attica and the islands as far as Andros.' The journey is staged as a gauntlet for Flaccus to run, the divine recompense for the gauntlet which the condemned Jews ran to the theatre in Alexandria on the Emperor's birthday.'

Reaching Andros, Flaccus delivers a long soliloquy of despair, and at last acknowledges the God of the Jews, just as the persecutor Galerius was to acknowledge the God of the Christians several centuries later: 'βασίλειε θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων οὐκ ἔφα τὸς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθνους ἀμελὲς εἶναι' (170) His miserable end once again affords a striking contrast to that of Paul. Whereas Acts does not tell us what became of Paul in the end, but leaves him at Rome, preaching 'quite openly and unhindered', the end of Flaccus is described in gruesome detail. The executioners mangled him, for 'Justice willed to perpetrate upon one body wounds equal in number to the murders of the Jews who had been unlawfully

destroyed.' Finally the body disintegrated on its way to the grave:

Τοιαῦτα καὶ ψάλλεσθαι ἔπαυσε,
γενόμενος ἀφελουδοστόγη... πίστις τοῦ μὴ ἀπεστεργῆσθαι
τὸ Ἰουδαίου ἔθνος ἐπικουρίας τοῦ Θεοῦ.

On all this Box comments: 'The mode of behaviour attributed to Flaccus both in his life and death recall Biblical passages...In (his) desire for solitude and a life of isolation we may suspect that Philo had in mind the story of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:31-7. He goes so far as to say 'His solitude was beastlike' (sec.177) But 'we should not be justified in rejecting the whole story of Flaccus' life on a lonely plot as a literary invention.'

Compared with the account in Acts of Paul's voyage to Rome, the following points emerge:

1. The voyage is written in 'we-style' as are those parts of the 'Legatio' which took place when Philo himself was present.
2. The story in Acts contains much circumstantial detail. This led Dibelius and Haenchen to explain it as a literary account which the author inserted into his narrative. Parallels can be found in Lucien and Achilles Tatius.* A few of these literary parallels

* They are usefully collected by Conzelmann:

Appendix to HNT.

also appear in Philo's sea voyage: for example:

πνεύματος ἐναντίον καταπραχέντος
κυρία ταλαιπωρηθεὶς μᾶλλον ἄχρι
τοῦ Περαιῶς κατασύρεται

with which we may compare Lucian: navig 7.

Βεθύρου ἀντιπνευσάντος ἀπεχθῆναι
πλαγίους ἄχρι Σιδῶνος

and Acts 27:15, after the ship is struck by the

north-easter: συναρπασθέντων δὲ τοῦ
πλοίου καὶ μὴ δυναμένου αὐτοβθάλμειν
τῷ ἀνέμῳ, ἐπιδιδόντες
ἐφερόμεθα

Can we say more than that all this is con-
temporary 'seafarers' language? Certainly no
theory of literary borrowing will permit us to
deny that ^{the} Acts story is more 'historical' than
the account given by Philo in the sense that it
depends on a genuine eye-witness account and is
not created or even controlled by apologetic
motives. One specific detail - that Paul was
allowed to go ashore and stay with friends in Sidon
- is confirmed by Philo's statement that the

wretched Flaccus was denied that right.*

The narrative of Acts shows signs of vagueness not on the journey to Rome, but after the Roman believers have met the apostle at Appii Forum and Three Taverns. The theological dialogues with the Jew, leading as usual to deadlock, are stylised in form, though less extravagant than the lament of Flaccus on Andros. The author's apologetic motive is clear - to finalise the rejection of Israel, after the flesh, though this need not of course imply that no such dialogue took place at all.

Thus a comparison between Acts and Philo reveals numerous interesting points of contact in language and attitudes. The sea voyage in Acts

* It is not denied that the centurion Julius is a 'good centurion' - as indeed are most centurions in the New Testament. Clearly too, the stress on 'good centurions' is partly apologetic in motive, but that does not make the 'good Centurions' fictitious. Selection, not invention, is the key to Luke's choice of material. In the Nigerian civil war one missionary known to the present writer was 'liberated' by a military officer who turned out to be a former pupil of one of the missionary's own schools. Was this a coincidence, a rumour, or a special providence?

emerges as a much more accurate account than the last journey of Flaccus, and while both works have their own theological presuppositions, these are less explicit in Acts: Philo tends to point out the workings of divine justice in a way that seems rather crude, at least to modern taste, but he is honest enough to make concessions to the other side. Among the Alexandrians he distinguishes between the 'solid democratic element' and the mob. Certainly he writes 'theocratic history' in that he seeks to show that 'the Jewish race had not been deprived of the succour that comes from God.' But for a man who had been through a pogrom, he could even claim to be impartial. Minor points of fact which do not help his case, he does not stoop to suppress: they lie like erratic boulders with no obvious relationship to his scheme of 'salvation-history.'* Box was able to write: 'Flaccus was a very able governor: the testimony of his great enemy, Philo, is conclusive on that point.** For several years he had kept the peace between Jew and Gentile in Alexandria! Thus Philo, even if no historian, turns out to provide material for a good deal of history, and Luke's writings must surely be regarded as

* see p.129

** Box p liv.

more 'historiographically promising' (pace Professor Finley) than the 'In Flaccum'. We cannot say of him that 'such considerations as the clear arrangement of his material, strict observance of his chronology, the impartial chronicling of events whether favourable or unfavourable...did not enter into his scheme.'*

When we compare Acts with the other examples of Jewish 'salvation-history' which we have studied, we find that it ranks with 1 Maccabees as a genuine historical work. The author has made a serious attempt to tell the story "as it really happened" according to his own light and understanding. If Luke is no Thucydides, he still belongs to the genus 'historian'. Mere propaganda will not stand the test of time.**

* We agree with the verdict of E.Trocme(p.98.'Il est en somme aux grands historiens grecs ou latins ce qu'un bon érudit de province est à un professeur de Sorbonne. Il connaît les bonnes méthodes, mais ne les applique pas toujours avec toute l'ampleur de vues désirable.')

** Apart from its strikingly modern interest to the student of race relations, the 'Embassy' offers one other technical point of interest. When the pronoun 'we' is used, it means what it says; namely, Philo and his party. The other side of the question; the point of view of the Alexandrian Greeks - can be read in 'The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs' ed. H. Musurillo.

CHAPTER 4.

BEGINNING FROM JERUSALEM: THE TRADITIONS OF ACTS 1-5

The early chapters of the Book of Acts are the only extant account of the origins of the Christian Church in Jerusalem. For that reason they remain of perennial interest to the student of the New Testament. Few critics would be dogmatic about the role they tell: estimates vary from a verdict of complete reliability on the one hand, to one of total fiction on the other. Between these extremes it may well be that Luke has reconstructed the past as best he can with the little information he has. Even so, if in the structure of Luke's buildings we can discern stones and fragments of older buildings, that too will be of value to us in our estimate of Christian origins.

It is worth while briefly summarising the story as Luke tells it:

1: 1-5 Preface, linking the book with the preceding Gospel.

6-12. Return of the disciples to Jerusalem: the community consists of the 11 disciples, 'the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, with his brothers' (who presumably include James the Just.)

15-26. Selection of a replacement for Judas Iscariot.

The candidates were Matthias and Joseph called

Barsabbas: 'and the lot fell on Matthias'.

2. The Day of Pentecost: The Holy Spirit fell on the believers, which amazed the 'devout men from every nation under heaven.' Peter's speech followed, (14 - 40) and 'about three thousand souls' were converted.

There then follows a summary of the communal life of the church: 'they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need.' They were attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes.

3. 1 - 10. A lame man was healed by Peter, accompanied by John, at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful.

11 - 20 Peter delivered another speech, calling the people to repentance.

4. 1 - 4 Peter and John were arrested by the 'priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees,' and kept in custody for the night. 'About five thousand' believed.

5 - 22 Peter and John were brought before the rulers and elders and scribes...with Annas the High Priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander. In reply to Peter's bold confession (v12) they could say nothing: They decided to 'warn them to speak no more in this name.' (v17) They could do nothing else, for public opinion favoured the apostles. The former cripple was in fact over forty.

23 - 31 The assembled believers offered a hymn of

praise and thanksgiving: 'the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.' (v31)

32 - 37 Community living (? communism) among the believers: 'none said that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common.' Joseph, a Levite, from Cyprus, sold his field and handed over the proceeds to the apostles. They gave him the surname 'Barnabas' - which, according to Luke, meant 'Son of Encouragement.'

5. 1 - 11 The sad case of Ananias and Sapphira. Ananias attempted to deceive the apostles - he 'lied to the Holy Spirit' (v3) and died. He was buried by the 'young men' (v6). When his wife Sapphira arrived 'after an interval of about three hours' Peter spoke to her sternly and she also died. 'Great fear came upon the whole church'.

12 - 16 (approximately) Another 'progress' report. 'They were all together in Solomon's portico.' 'Multitudes were added to the Lord. It was believed that Peter's shadow might heal the sick, who were also brought in from 'the towns around Jerusalem'.

17 - 21 The apostles were arrested by the High Priest ...and 'the party of the Sadducees.' They were released by an angel and returned at once to preaching in the

17 - 21 (cont.) Temple.

22 - 26 This caused great confusion to the 'council' and all the senate of Israel' (τὸ συνέδριον καὶ πᾶσαι τὴν γερουσίαν τῶν ἱουδαίων) The apostles were re-arrested, 'but without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.'

27 - 39 'Peter and the apostles' continued to maintain a bold front. The council was advised to be cautious by Gamaliel, 'a Pharisee...a teacher of the law, held in honour by all the people.' Gamaliel in his speech made the famous comparison with Theudas and Judas the Galilean, and advised the Jewish leaders to leave the apostles alone. 'Otherwise, you might even be found opposing God.' (5:39)

40 - 42 The council accepted this view, but still the apostles were beaten and told not to speak in the name of Jesus (παρήγγειλλαν μὴ λαλεῖν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἀπελῦσαν)
The apostles, however, continued to teach and preach 'every day in the temple and at home.'

Such is Luke's account of Christian origins. It has made a profound impression on the folk memory of the Church, and while certainty is no doubt unattainable, it is clearly of interest to determine to what extent, if any, it is an accurate account of what actually happened.

The great effort made by source-critics was to isolate the various sources used by the author and thus to estimate, if possible, the value of the sources themselves. Thus it might be possible to 'get at the facts' and estimate what really happened.*

A summary of the efforts of source critics is given by McGiffert** and also by Haenchen***. Towards the end of the 19th century, in this field as in others, some criticism tended to run riot. For the Acts this culminated in the work of Clemen.

****'A history of Peter, in which half a dozen small sources had already been incorporated, and a history of Paul, which had the Lucan travel document as its foundation, were combined by a Jewish editor: an anti-Jewish editor then worked over the whole

* And why not? As R. Bultmann has written: 'Die Fragestellung der quellenkritischen Forschung auch ihr Recht hatte, und in gewisser Weise auch von den Acta selbst herausegefordert wird.' (N.T. Essays ed. A.J.B. Higgins p.69)

** Beg: II p.385 ff.

***H.p.22f.

****'Der Zusammenhang von Apg.1-5' (Studien und Kritiken 1895 - quoted by Haenchen p.27)

(document) .'

One of the last and most influential attempts at source analysis was that of Harnack: his works 'Luke the Physician', and the 'Acts of the Apostles' still have the great merit of readability and precision. When he turned to the early chapters of Acts he propounded with clarity a famous idea - not indeed originated by himself: that of parallel sources.*

The theory of parallel sources.

'Everyone', wrote Harnack, 'who carefully reads chapters II-V and attempts to realise the connection and succession of events recorded in those chapters must necessarily recognise that the whole second chapter and 5:17-42 are elements which disturb and obstruct the flow of the narrative - are, in fact, doublets which are in more than one respect liable to exception.' (AA p179)

The offending incidents, as seen by Harnack, are; the account of Pentecost and the address which followed it, plus the second arrest of the apostles, their examination and the speech by Gamaliel. By omitting them, argued Harnack, we would get a coherent narrative at once.

1. Healing of the lame man.
2. Missionary sermon by Peter in Solomon's portico.

* Parallel sources were traced by Spitta and Jungst throughout the book. Harnack confined them to the early chapters.

3. Conversion of 5,000* people - arrest of Peter and John.
4. Examination of the apostles: another missionary discourse: release of Peter and John.
5. Return of the apostles: prayer of thanksgiving by the believers.
6. Directly afterwards - this still before mid-day, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,** accompanied by a kind of earthquake: the immediate result: *ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ παρρησίας* - further result; they were all of one mind, 'neither said any that aught of the things he possessed was his own', and - *ἐνῆλθεν μεγάλη ἀπεδίδουν τὸ μαρτύριον οἱ ἀπόστολοι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας* 4:31-33.
7. The church had 'all things common' but there followed the Ananias and Sapphira incident: 'As an especially appalling instance of apostolic power it

* Harnack conjectured there might be one figure too many here - and so sought to link the story with the 500 brethren of 1 Cor 15:6.

** It is a key point in Harnack's theory that this is the 'more historical' account of the gift of the 'Holy Spirit', and that Acts 2 is a 'doublet'.

is quite in place in the context.' 4:34-5:11

8. Signs and wonders are done: the believers gather in Solomon's portico and sick folk are brought in from outside Jerusalem. 5:12-16.

'Here', concludes Harnack, 'we have a narrative marked by consistency, a logical connection in the succession of events.' The same could not be said, however, for the episodes described in 2 and 5:17-42.

1. In chapter 2 for example, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in visible form is followed by the result

λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις

so as to be understood by all. 2:1-17.

2. Peter's great missionary sermon followed, presupposing 'τέρατα' of which nothing is said in the narrative.

3. Success was achieved. There were about 3,000 converts, and the believers continued in fellowship. 2:42-47.

4. The apostles were thrown into prison by the authorities - especially the Sadducees - but were liberated by an angel. 5:17 - 21.

5. The authorities rearrested the apostles, forbade them to preach and had them scourged. 5:21-41.

6. The apostles continued to teach in the temple and at home. 5:42.

'It is, in my opinion, so clear that we have here a second narrative of the same events that one

can only wonder that the knowledge that this is so has not long ago become common property.' Such was the conclusion of Harnack, though as so often, what was quite obvious to him proved less obvious to others. The first account, which he called (A), was 'far superior to the second recension (B)'.

'We may with confidence leave it to the reader to test that this is so both on the whole and in detail...St.Luke did not perceive that he was reproducing two traditions concerning the same circumstances.' Harnack adds an important footnote here: 'St. Luke's character as an historian quite excludes the hypothesis that the recension 'B' is a free invention of his; there is, however, no doubt that here as elsewhere he had added his own touches.'

But while 'B' gives an inconsequential account, "in 'A' everything has hands and feet: the cure of the impotent man...explains everything: the courage with which Peter openly proclaims Jesus... the imprisonment of St.Peter (and St.John?): his open testimony before the Jewish authorities....: his dismissal through the fear of the people. And now, after the return of the Apostle, the enthusiasm of the first believers - the 5,000 - ie.probably the 500- arose into an ecstasy which opened the way to the

reception of the Spirit - ie. what then happened was the actual, the historical Pentecost."

Version B on the other hand 'is best explained as the next stage after A in the process of legendary development.' 'It is most noteworthy that in B, St. Peter, in his discourse, mentions 'τέρατα' which were bound up with the 'outpouring', though nothing had been said of them in the narrative. In 'A' on the other hand we find the earthquake!''*

Having thus isolated his sources A and B, Harnack felt able to attempt a historical reconstruction:

'After the cure of the lame man, the public witness of St. Peter, (before the people and the council) and his suffering as a confessor, we learn that the resulting ecstasy of the little company of believers was confirmed by an earthquake. This created public amazement: St. Peter then delivered a discourse, explaining this 'outpouring' as being also the initial stage of the Day of Judgement. By this the listeners

* This certainly seems rather odd. An earthquake - in the sense of a real seismic disturbance - is a striking coincidence at a time of religious exultation: Peter's reference to 'τέρατα' which had not actually occurred might seem a mild error in comparison. Yet Harnack seems to regard the earthquake as historical.

were cut to the heart: and under this influence many joined the new community. The great majority of them were Hellenists, while the natives of Jerusalem held aloof.' Harnack p.185.

Here we have a classic example of reconstruction or source-critical presuppositions. The author has tried to give a true account of what actually happened. Only imperfectly has he succeeded, but it is possible with the right methods, to penetrate behind his statements, evaluate them, observe a doublet in his story which he failed to notice himself, and then to reconstruct what actually happened.

Before considering some criticisms of Harnack's position, it is worth taking a look at the results achieved by another contemporary scholar.*

Johannes Weiss believed that 'the author of the Book of Acts gives us an idealised account of the origin of the church! His statement that 'The Twelve' were rulers of the primitive community is at variance with that of Paul: 'the account of the completion of the Twelve, by the election of Matthias, is an 'ecclesiastical legend.'** It arose from the idea that twelve, the sacred number, could not be left

* Johannes Weiss in 'Earliest Christianity'

** Earliest Christianity, Vol 1 p 49.

incomplete by the apostasy of Judas. They therefore selected by lot - 'the Lord would decide' - a twelfth man to replace the apostate.*

Weiss subjects the statistics of Luke to earnest criticism: 'This picture of a steady course of growth and of a divinely guided if gradual expansion is strictly in accordance with the plan of the author, who is endeavouring to show the march of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome to have been a matter of divine necessity. But the question is whether or not his artistic skill has supplied the lack of concrete data. (The statistics) result mainly from conjecture and are probably exaggerated.'

Nevertheless, the early chapters of Acts, though they paint an idealised picture of the past, are not, for Weiss, devoid of all value. The statements about the women, including Mary** the mother of Jesus, and about the brethren of Jesus, are worthy of credit, particularly because the brethren of Jesus were clearly not among his supporters 'in the days of his

* The same idea could of course have occurred to the primitive community itself. Here is another argument which works both ways.

** Weiss conjectures that the Mother of Jesus has been confused with Mary the mother of John Mark. (E.C.p51)

flesh'. So too are the statements about Barnabas and Judas Barsabbas. A good test of credibility is that a statement should contradict 'the schematic and un-historical conception of the editor of Acts.' (p52)

But Weiss renounces the approach of Harnack, who was prepared to see in the narrative of Acts 1-5 an account of events as they actually happened (once the doubtful source B has been eliminated). Instead he used the general picture given by Luke, and certain of his key concepts - the common life and the common meal, for example, - to reconstruct an interesting picture. It is quite credible that the believers gathered in Solomon's portico, as muslims gather round a learned 'mallam' at the mosque. It is also credible that Peter and John went into the temple at the hour of prayer (3:1) and shared in the common Jewish prayer. Yet their failure to join in sacrificial worship may indicate that like their master, and certain other Jewish groups,* they were not very interested in the cultus as such.

Weiss attempts to throw light on the common meals and the communal living of the earliest group. On the 'breaking of bread' indeed, the Book of Acts gives

* When Weiss wrote, the caves and community of Qmran were still undiscovered.

us little to go on, but by recourse to the Didache, Weiss seeks to demonstrate the existence of a fellowship meal, parallel to the Pauline one, in which the broken bread had not at first represented the broken body of the Lord: Indeed, 'the moment when someone, as the red wine was first being poured from the skin into the cup, first thought of the outpoured blood of Christ,* was one of the greatest importance in every respect.' (Weiss p.61)

Luke's account of the community life of the earliest church (2:44; 4:32-34) 'must precisely on account of their summary generalities be accepted with great caution.' The statement in 4:32 ('they had all things common') echoes still another ideal representation, the one, namely, that Josephus gives of the Essenes.

'...They have a rule that whoever joins the sect must place his property at the disposal of the society for its common use, so that in general one finds neither the degradation of poverty nor the distinction of wealth: moreover, since all the possessions of

* Lietzmann's 'Messe und Herrenmahl' gave classic expression to this view. And who did first associate the wine and the blood? Obviously not Jesus himself, on the view taken by Weiss.

individuals are lumped together, they all like brothers share only one common property.' (BJ:11:8:3-4)

Weiss comments on this passage: 'Even though the author of Acts may not have known (it), it remains very instructive. It shows what a fully developed communism looks like.' There was a fixed rule which had to be obeyed, whereas Peter's word to Ananias - 'While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own' (Acts 5:3) - shows that there was no compulsion.

The summary in 4:34-35, according to Weiss, brings us 'nearer the actual situation'. 'As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostle's feet.' 'All the more significant then is the fact (our emphasis) ' that the apostles administered the gifts: this was the first beginning of an ecclesiastical office.' They were not chosen by the people, as were the stewards of the Essenes, and the inadequacy of this arrangement led to the dispute between Greek and Aramaic speakers recorded in Chapter 6. Finally the misguided enthusiasm of the believers in Jerusalem led to their 'speedy impoverishment' (Weiss p73). The 'poor among the saints in Jerusalem' (Romans 15:26) were in difficulties partly because of their own mismanagement.

Let us sum up the attitude of Johannes Weiss to

the material found in Acts 1-5: he makes no attempt to elucidate from it a connected sequence of events, in the manner of Harnack. He does, however, accept that certain data may be used: for example, that the believers worshipped in the temple, that a number of priests and Pharisees joined them, that they observed the Jewish hours of prayer, and that they practised a form of communal living, though not with a rigid organisation in the Essene manner. Thus Weiss would appear to accept the general, while doubting the particular.

But if Weiss took a more sceptical view of Acts 1-5 than did Harnack, a most interesting study has been made from another angle, by Joachim Jeremias.*

Noting Harnack's theory that the 'good' source A went back to Philip and his daughters, while the less valuable 'B' described 'step by step the same events', Jeremias proceeded to make a list of the evidence on which Harnack had based his theory:

a) Both sources report a missionary sermon of Peter with great success in conversions.

A 3:11-4:4 . - B 2: -14.

* (in the ZNW Vol 36:1936) Untersuchungen zum Quellenproblem der Apostelgeschichte.

b) Both portray the Pentecost event

A 4:31

B 2:1 - 13.

c) Both give an account of the (wrongly so-called) 'community of goods' in the primitive community.

A 4:32, 34f

B 2:44 - 45

d) Both sources recount the arrest and trial of the Apostles and the prohibition of their preaching, with their defiance of that prohibition.

A 4:1 - 22

B 5:17 - 42

Having summarised Harnack's argument in these four points, Jeremias roundly dismissed the first two of them. There is no close parallel between the two sermons by Peter, who must have preached more than once! Moreover, 'both the occasion and the content of the speeches are fundamentally different.' 'B' follows the Pentecost event and 'A' follows the healing of the lame man. Moreover, there is no real reason to regard the statement of 4:31 (καὶ δεηθέντων αὐτῶν ἑσαλεύθη ὁ τοπὸς ἐν ᾧ ἦσαν συνηγμένοι, καὶ ἐπλησθῆσαν ἅπαντες τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος) as another version of the traditional Pentecost account. 'The Pentecost story was not the only 'pneumatic' experience of the earliest church' says Jeremias, who points out that the gift of the spirit is regarded as a 'visible event' (sichtbares Ereignis)*

* We are dealing here with a naive psychology of religion which Luke shared with most of his contemporaries.

by Simon Magus at 8:18, as well as in the Cornelius story at 10:44. Harnack's first two points are thus disposed of, and there remain the third and fourth to be considered.

Jeremias then proceeds to a close analysis of the summaries in which Luke refers to a community of goods. It is the method of Luke, he declares, to construct a summary from an 'Einzelbericht' or 'individual statement.' This can be seen from the Gospel, where Luke twice makes use of Mark's statement at 1:28 ἐξῆλθε δὲ ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ εὐθὺς πανταχοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν περίχωρον τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

This appears in Luke at 4:14: Καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ Πνεύματος εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν· καὶ φήμῃ ἐξῆλθεν καθ' ὅλης τῆς περιχώρου περὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐδίδασκεν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν, δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων.

and again at v37 in the same chapter: καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο ὁ ἦχος περὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς πάντα τόπον τῆς περιχώρου.

Jeremias concludes that Luke's summaries have grown up out of 'Einzelberichte' and are secondary to them: and that Luke preferred to use them as a link to connect isolated stories into a continuous narrative. It is therefore Luke's technique 'to

bind stories together by means of summaries.' This can be seen in Acts itself on several occasions where the expression 'μέν οὖν' occurs: for example:

6:7 και ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἤϋξανε, κ.τ.λ.

8:25 Οἱ μέν οὖν, διαμαρτυράμενοι καὶ λαλήσαντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, ἐπέστρεφον εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ^{μα}, πολλὰς τε κώμας τῶν Σαμαρατῶν εὐηγγελίζοντο.

9:31 Ἡ μέν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας εἶχεν εἰρήνην οἰκοδομουμένην κτλ.

16:5 αἱ μέν οὖν ἐκκλησίαι ἐστερεοῦντο τῇ πίστει, καὶ ἐπερίσσευσεν τὸ ἀριθμῶν καθ' ἡμέραν.

(Compare also 12:24 and 19:20)

Jeremias proceeds to argue that the sections which refer to primitive communism are to be numbered among the summaries of Acts. 'Not only in content, but also most closely in the form of words,' and more important still, these summaries show clear signs of expansion and revision ('einer erweiternden Bearbeitung', p207) This is most clear in 4:32-35 (Harnack's A account of Christian beginnings). V33 is an insertion which

interrupts the sense.* ('And with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection, and great grace was upon them all.') Similar signs of expansion can be seen in the other summaries. In 5:11-16, v12 'many signs and wonders were done by the hands of the apostles...' should really be followed by v15 '...so that they even carried the sick out into the streets.'

Again, there are signs of expansion in chapter 2, where we have Harnack's 'less historical' (B) version of the Pentecost event. 2:43-47 is a 'later continuation of an older summary which concluded the Pentecost story: in other words, Luke has added the 'inspirational comment' "and fear came upon every soul, and many wonders were done...etc" to the plain statement that three thousand souls, converted on that day, devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers. (2:41-42)

Jeremias concluded: 'we must distinguish two stages within the summaries of Acts 2-5. The older stage includes 2:41-42, 4:32 and 4:34 and 5:11-14.

* This verse - and the Lucan summaries in general - seems to have greatly impressed the imagination of George Fox. Over and over again 'the power of God was over all' concludes an episode in his journal.

The later stage consists of 2:43-47, 4:33 and 5:15f. It therefore follows that there were three stages in the development of the tradition about 'community of goods' (Gütergemeinschaft)

1) The oldest pieces of tradition are 'die konkreten Einzelberichte' 4:36 and 5:10. These are the traditions about Barnabas and his field, and the catastrophe of Ananias and Sapphira.

2) Out of these isolated stories there grew the summary which now links them - verses 32 and 34-5 which describes in general terms the communal life of the believers.

3) Somebody - and probably the author of the book - then inserted verse 33 in chapter 4, and repeated the summary with embellishments in chapter 2 (v 44-47)

From this close exercise in higher criticism it follows, argues Jeremias, that there is no reason to assume a double tradition in the early church about community of goods: Harnack's source 'B' (2:44-45) is simply a copy of his more 'historical' source A (4:32&34)

All that remains of Harnack's theory now is the idea that the two stories of the arrest and trial of the apostles are in fact different versions of the same event. And it is here that Prof. Jeremias makes his most interesting and original

contribution, out of his knowledge of Rabbinic Judaism.

Many of the supposed parallels could easily arise if in fact the apostles were arrested twice, and there are also important discrepancies to be noted. In 4:1 Peter and John are arrested, but in 5:17 it is Peter and the Apostles. The first story is closely connected with the healing of the lame man, while the second links up with the intervention of Gamaliel. Most important, the first trial ends with a prohibition on preaching, while the second ends with prohibition and a flogging. This is where Jeremias, following K. Bornhäuser,* turns to Rabbinic law for enlightenment.

Rabbinic law lays down 4 conditions which must be met before an accused person is condemned:

- 1) There must be trial 'by due process of law'.
- 2) The Torah must specifically prescribe a punishment for the alleged crime.
- 3) There must be at least two witnesses.
- 4) The accused must have been warned of the consequence of his act by at least two witnesses before it was committed. 'None', declared R. Jose, 'may be put to death unless he has been warned at the

* Studien zur Apostelgeschichte: Gütersloh 1934:
p 58.

mouth of both his witnesses.' (Makkoth 1:7:Danby p 403) And according to Tosephta Sanhedrin 11:2: 'If they warned him and he was silent, or if they warned him and he nodded his head, or even if they warned him and he said 'I know it' - he is still free: unless he said 'I know - nevertheless I will do it.'

And this condition about previous warning- $\overline{\text{ל}} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$
T T : -
(Aramaic) applied not only in cases of capital crime, but also where flogging was proposed. Moreover, 'they used to prove witnesses with seven enquiries, one of which was: 'Did ye warn him?'' (Sanhedrin 5:1), so that an offence is only punishable after due warning has been given. Only scholars are exempted from the rule about warning - as students of the law they ought to know better.

But was the Rabbinic rule about 'warning' in force in New Testament times? Jeremias seeks to show that it was by an ingenious exegesis of the list of sinners in 1 Tim 1:9.

- a) 'Murderers of fathers and mothers' refers to the 5th commandment - to honour father and mother.
- b) 'Menslayers' refers to the 6th - 'thou shalt not kill'.
- c) 'Immoral persons, sodomites' refers to the 7th - 'thou shalt not commit adultery.

- d) 'Kidnappers' refers to the 8th - 'thou shalt not steal'.
- e) 'Liars and perjurers' refers to the 9th - 'thou shalt not bear false witness.'

But why the odd limitation of theft to kidnapping? Because the author of 1 Timothy is following Rabbinic tradition - whereby it was noted that the law stated (Exodus 21:16) 'Whoever kidnaps a man shall be put to death.' But where in the law, could the previous 'warning' be found? It was assumed that the 8th of the ten commandments referred to kidnapping and was in fact the 'warning without punishment' which the Rabbinic tradition required.

Two other examples are offered by Prof. Jeremias: During the Galilean ministry of Jesus, the disciples pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath day. The Pharisees say (Mark 2:24) 'Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?' This remark is 'no harmless observation, but a warning carried out in due form and in the presence of witnesses.' Jesus' reply ('Have you never read what David did?...') shows that he has understood the warning and is determined to persist in his conduct. Therefore, at Mark 3:2, 'they watched him' (παρατηροῦν αὐτὸν) because ' after due warning every further breach

of the Sabbath in the presence of witnesses is a criminal act punishable by death.' That is why, at Mark 3:6, and only then - the Pharisees took counsel - how to destroy him.

The last example is taken from the career of Paul. He went to Damascus (Acts 9:1) ἐμπνέων ἀπαλῆς καὶ φόβου. 'In spite of all his fanaticism, Saul, the persecutor of Christians, held correctly to the process, which allowed no death sentence without previous warning.' The word ἀπαλή is the equivalent of $\overline{\Pi} \overline{\iota} \overline{\gamma} \overline{\Gamma} \overline{\iota} \overline{\gamma}$ the Rabbinic term for an official warning.*

Thus the relation between the two trial stories stands revealed: Harnack's doublet-theory 'rests on ignorance of the contemporary legal process.' At their first arrest, Peter and John receive a solemn warning (ἀπαλῆσαντες (4:17) is a technical term) and are then released. Peter's declaration that he must obey God rather than man shows that he has understood the warning only too well. But on the second occasion the situation is different. The warning has been ignored, and the apostles can expect the death penalty: only because of the intervention of

* So lastly in John 5:10: οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι ἄραι τὸν κράββατον is another official warning.

Gamaliel do they escape with a beating - which could in any case prove fatal.

Jeremias concludes: "The course of the two stories corresponds in closest detail to the Jewish legal process - and the resemblances between the two incidents arises, because on both occasions a legal process is described whose course from the arrest to the announcement of the verdict is completely circumstantial." Thus 'the last and most significant argument for the division of Acts 2 - 5 into two parallel sources is shown to be untenable.'

The argument of Jeremias closely corresponds to that of Sherwin-White: the former tries to show that the trials in Acts 2-5 are correct in Jewish law, just as the latter tries to show that the trials of Paul are correct in Roman law. Unlike Harnack, and even more unlike Weiss, Jeremias regards the narrative of Acts 2-5 as an account of something which really did happen.

Nevertheless, certain doubts remain: firstly a Rabbinic exegete might observe that in the first incident Peter and John receive the official warning, while in the second, Peter and the apostles are lucky to escape with the '40 strokes less one.' But who warned the apostles? There may be a discrepancy here which is the fault of Luke or his

source: the 'warning' theory, whereby* ' *πρὸς ἀπειλήσασθαι* ' (4:21) refers to a technical process of Rabbinic law, may well be right but the correspondence is not quite as close as Jeremias maintains.**

* The ' *πρὸς* ' - says Jeremias, 'den Hinweis auf die durch die Aussage des Petrus geschaffene verschärfte Situation im Auge hat.' Unfortunately, we do not have access to the work of Bornhäuser on which Jeremias bases his theory.

** Rabbi Dr. J. Weinberg writes; "There is no doubt that according to Rabbinic tradition, a "solemn warning" had to be given in cases of flogging. This is clear from San. 8b. However, there is an opinion expressed that a scholar is held responsible for his crimes even without being formally warned, as 'warning' is only a means of deciding whether one has committed the crime willingly or not.

Since in Acts 4,13, we are told that the High Priest etc regarded Peter and John as "unlearned and ignorant men" all would agree that a "solemn warning" would be required. However, it should be borne in mind that the High Priest, the Priests etc. were all Sadducees and did not always accept the tradition and teachings of the Rabbis."

Secondly it must be supposed that Luke himself was not aware of the technical meaning of 'ἁπαλῆ'. He certainly shows no sign of it! The meaning, therefore, must have come from his source, which at some stage, written or oral, must have existed in Aramaic. The technical Aramaic meaning has then been preserved by Luke unawares. This could well be true in the two Sanhedrin scenes ἁπαλῆσώμεθα αὐτούς (4:17) προσῆκοντες (4:20): and Παραγγελία παρηγγείλαμεν ἑμῶν μὴ διδάσκειν... (5:28). The last case indeed looks uncommonly like a Semitism - the use of the infinitive absolute. There is also a little manuscript evidence, the reading ἁπαλῆ ἁπαλῆσώμεθα at 4:17. Jeremiaś would seem to have shown this much: that the Sanhedrin procedure did correspond to what is portrayed here, and if Luke composed the whole account with little or no source material, then he had certainly 'done his homework' on the Mishnah - or the traditions which were collected into the Mishnah c. AD 200 - before he started. c. AD 200

The last example - that of Saul going to Damascus ἐμπνέων ἁπαλῆς - is surely weaker. If it had a technical Rabbinic meaning, and if Saul remained a stickler for correct procedure even in carrying out a persecution, then it is hardly obvious from the text. Nor was the death of

Stephen - as reported by Acts - an execution carried out in due form! The phrase seems rather to be an example of Septuagintal style - F.F. Bruce compares Ps 28:15 ἐπὶ ἐπαύσεως πνεύματος ὀργῆς σου. It could be a hendiadys - 'breathing threats of slaughter.'

The theory of Jeremiās must be surely presuppose the existence of written sources which reflect an Aramaic account of events. His reference to Mark would also seem to imply that the Marcan order has some historical value, for Jesus and his followers receive their solemn Rabbinic warning in chapter 2, and then, after they have ignored it, the death of Jesus is plotted in chapter 3. A very different attitude appears with the rise of Form-Criticism.

Martin Dibelius

The studies which Martin Dibelius made of the Acts of the Apostles have had a decisive effect in the last twenty-five years. The tendency of his work, as of form-criticism generally, has been to increase scepticism about written sources and to increase the importance of oral tradition. While Dibelius never offered a detailed analysis of Acts 1-5, it is clear that he did not think it in any sense a narrative close to events which really

happened. 'Far more material had been preserved about the life of Jesus than about the experiences of the early community. The first seven or eight chapters of Acts show that comparatively little was preserved and handed down on the latter subject. We have only the stories of the Ascension and the Whitsun miracle, the healing of the lame man at the gate of the temple, the death of Ananias and his wife by means of a sort of curse by Peter, and finally the martyrdom of Stephen - that is, five stories.'

With this minimal quantity of material then, Luke did his best. In writing Acts he was not as bound to adhere closely to tradition as he was in writing the gospel. 'His capabilities and inclination can this time be employed in a different way, because he has to write here without predecessors, sometimes probably without written sources, and to see how he can make a consecutive account of what he knows and what he can discover. The new style is conditioned by the new task.' (Essays p 124).

Dibelius made an attempt to classify some of the material found in Acts 1-5 on form critical principles: the story of the lame man at the gate of the temple (3:1-10) he regarded as a 'Novelle' or 'Tale'. 'We are struck by the fullness of the description; the visit to the temple is made

because it is the hour of prayer. The gate (The Nikanor gate) is mentioned by the popular name not preserved for us anywhere else: the circumstances of the miracle is given in detail, including the long illness, the fastening of the eyes, the formula ('in the name'), the gestures which together achieve the miracle and the description of the recovery...v.11 provides a link with the literary composition of the scenes containing the speech and the trial, and because the author does not know the exact locality, a contradiction is found in his account: according to v 8, the heroes of the story are in the temple, that is, in the inner forecourt, but according to v.11, they are in Solomon's porch, that is on the east side of the outer forecourt. (Dib. p 14-15)*

Dibelius clearly regards the trial scene as a composition by Luke. He has received only the healing in oral form, and he has 'written up' the trial scene as best he can. The theory that we have a close and precise reference to Jewish legal procedure deriving from events as they happened, is quite obviously rejected.

* A discrepancy corrected by the Codex Bezae!

So too with the Ananias and Sapphira incident: it shows a 'devotional' interest in subsidiary characters. 'Luke has used this story as a case to illustrate what he summarised in 4:32-35 (Community of goods) and has linked it with the story about Barnabas... we are to beware of committing the same sin... moreover, the biblical sound of the phrase 'the feet of them that buried my husband' (Isaiah 52:7) is intended to increase the devotional sense of horror. Devotional interest also reveals for us the names of the sinners and one or two details of the burial.' (Gray p 16)

While Dibelius believed that the 'itinerary' formed a guiding thread for Acts 13-21, he considered that it could not be traced after 21:17, and furthermore, 'It is not difficult to show that such a thread was not available in Acts 1-5 also: For there is no continuous narrative at all the fortunes of the community in Jerusalem; on the contrary, narratives, speeches and trial scenes succeed one another, and it is not clear whether or how the conflict in 5:17 is connected with that reported in chapters 3 and 4*....we shall not

* This is precisely the gap which the Rabbinic 'warning and punishment' theory of Jeremias attempts to bridge.

discuss whether it was tradition or composition that was responsible for producing the individual passages: at any rate, a continuous account, to link them together was neither handed down to the writer nor formed by him... His pragmatic endeavours are seen only in the different general summaries which, interposed between the various scenes and narratives, provide links and elaborations. In this way individual events reported in these stories are made to appear as particular instances in those parts of the text which give generalised descriptions of the typical circumstances.' (Essays p.9) Dibelius thus agrees with Jeremias on the purpose of the summaries, but considers that Luke had only isolated fragments of tradition which he built into the structure of his narrative.

The further development of these ideas can be seen in the work of Haenchen. He regards the whole story of the trial before the Sanhedrin as highly dubious. The earliest church was quite closely linked with Judaism. The members had no idea of starting a new religion, 'They only saw in the Messiah Jesus the fulfilment of the Jewish hope. But Luke has quite wrongly supposed that only the Sanhedrin party was against the new movement....' Not that the hearing described in Chapter 4 was in

reality instigated by the Pharisees. 'This story of the trial is rather one of these lively pictures, one of those dramatic scenes, which Luke presents to the reader instead of a modest dogmatic presentation of the right and duty of preaching Christ: He shows how the Christian may follow the example of the apostles - these *ἐν θρώποις ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται* and may, in the certainty of heavenly support, give a fearless testimony for his Lord, unafraid of the police, of arrest or of official prohibitions.'

Luke was indeed convinced that the scene he depicted corresponded in essentials (im Kern) to the events, for he knew from Mark 13:9 (compare Luke 12:11) that the Christians were brought before the Sanhedrin. 'We will not reproach the author because he did not miss the opportunity to depict this great scene for himself and his readers. But Luke the historian also placed value on this scene: for only in this way could he depict the growth of conflict, that led to the scattering of the church in chapter 8, in the form of a historical development.' (Haenchen p 183)

This is a good example of much of the exegesis of Haenchen: the 'setting in life' of the story is to be sought in Luke's own time (the late Flavian period) and not in Jerusalem in the fourth decade of

the first century. Luke's purpose is to steel the resolution of his contemporaries in the face of persecution, and his story of a double trial in which Peter was involved, has no foundation in fact. The 'Urgemeinde' was not persecuted at all.

With this view we reach the opposite pole from Harnack and Jeremias: for Haenchen the stories in Acts 1-5 are reconstructions built out of tiny fragments of tradition. Luke knew only odd pieces of information - that Barnabas had sold a piece of land, for example, - and he made the best of them.

On this 'ultra-sceptical' view the following comments may be made.

- 1) Bultmann's criticism still holds good - that the apologetic value of Luke's account would lose nothing if it were historically true.
'This unity (of a Lucan account) can not therefore be a criterion for deciding that the author has not included in his composition a text* transmitted to him - a piece of a 'source.'
We would add to this that the edifying example that Luke describes would be even more edifying if historically true - for as noted before -

* Bultmann - N.T. Essays p 71

fact is the best kind of propaganda.*

- 2) It is not a priori improbable that the authorities who were involved in the execution of Jesus of Nazareth also took some steps against his followers: the orthodox and established group never like to see a rival cult emerge on their flank. Recent church history in Africa, and notably in South Africa and in the Congo,** could provide several examples of this.
- 3) Haenchen's idea that only the 'Hellenists' were persecuted seems to be contradicted by Paul himself in 1 Thess 3:14. Here, in quite bitter language, Paul tells the Thessalonians:

* There is in Acts little of the wildly miraculous which tends to offend the modern reader in so honourable an author as Bede (The History of the English Church and People). We have the healing of the lame man (3:7) and release by an angel (5:19).

** See, for example, Messianic Movements in the Lower Congo: by E. Anderson (Lund).

ὑμεῖς γὰρ μνηστὰι ἐγενήθητε... τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν... τῶν
 οὐσῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ· ὅτι τὰ αὐτὰ ἐπάθετε καὶ
 ἡμεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων συμψηφιστῶν, καθὼς καὶ αὐτοὶ
 ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων

1 Thess 2:14-16

The unusually tense tone of this outburst surely reflects a house divided - it implies that in Judea Jew has been persecuting Jew: there has been civil strife within the clan - ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων συμψηφιστῶν - and this is a logical continuation of the policy which led to the death of Jesus.*

But if we reject the scepticism of Haenchen, where shall we find resting-ground? Harnack, Weiss and numerous other scholars have said their say.

We consider one more: Etienne Trocmé.

TROCMÉ:

Analysis of Acts 1 - 5 is, says Trocmé 'fort problematique' because we have no parallel narrative to guide us. He therefore makes a few observations on 'un problème sans doute insoluble.'

* And here, in this early letter (unless we deny it to Paul) responsibility for the death of Jesus is placed squarely on the Jews. The idea that it was simply apologetic motives that led people to shift the blame (from Romans to Jews) finds no support here.

** Le livre des Actes et l'histoire: p.191-209.

Firstly it is possible that the traditions which Luke used to compose his passion narrative also gave him some information which he used in the early chapters of Acts.

Secondly there must be something in the theory of Aramaic documents behind these chapters: while C.C. Torrey failed to make out his case for the whole of Acts 1-15, there are enough possible mistranslations in these chapters - especially 2:47, 3:16 and 4:25 - to imply that Aramaic writing in some form lies behind them.

As for the speeches - that of Gamaliel was written by Luke himself. But even the blunder about Judas and Theudas may not be entirely the fault of the author, who perhaps found them mentioned side by side in a Jewish or Jewish-Christian document.

The prayer of thanksgiving (4:24-30) contains one of the most notorious Aramaisms - 'who by the mouth of our father David thy servant didst say by the Holy Spirit...' side by side with a group of texts taken directly from the LXX. Could it be that Luke had a written source which he amplified with texts from his Greek Bible?

Trocme has a new idea to offer on Ananias and Sapphira: Luke cannot have invented this incident, which does not correspond at all with his picture

of progress in the church. Here Qumran comes to our aid: there was in the Jerusalem church, as among the Essenes, an inner group of 'perfect ones' - $\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\omicron\tau$ - and the offence of the unhappy couple lay in the fact that they fraudulently sought access to this powerful group. The young men who buried them ($\omicron\iota\ \nu\epsilon\alpha\nu\iota\sigma\kappa\omicron\iota$) were in fact* 'novices who did 'unclean' work, like the burial of dead bodies.'

Whether this theory will be widely accepted remains to be seen: we are on less uncertain ground when Trocme holds, against Dibelius and his followers, that there was 'beneath chapters 4 - 5 a document of a certain extent, which described the legal procedures taken against the Jerusalem apostles as a result of their activity in the temple. This may be linked with the story of the lame man in the chapter three, but not with chapter two. There is no chronological link between chapters two and three, the 'eleven' disappear abruptly after 2:14; the temple suddenly becomes important (as from the linking summary of

* In this speculation, Trocme follows J. Schmitt in 'Les Manuscrits de la Mer Morte: Colloque de Strasbourg' (1955) to which we have not had access.

2:46) and chapters 3-4-5 do not mention the Pentecost event at all.

Trocme concludes: 'In the middle of this section, the passage 4:32-5:11 appears as a foreign body. By its subject (community of goods) it is widely separated from its context, the preaching and even more the miracles of Peter and the Apostles. We may suppose that underneath chapters 3 - 5 lies an account of a miracle performed by Peter, and of the persecutions of Peter and 'his own people' ('les siens' - $\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ 4:23) by the Jerusalem authorities. The relative length and complexity of this account, and the way in which John's name appears superfluous (3:4, 4:13) suggest a written document. It may be noted that Peter appears in the role of healer (thaumaturge) 3:4, 5:15 - as he does at 9: 32-43 and also as a visionary (5: 19 - 20) as he does at 10: 9-16 and 12: 6-10.'

Luke added his own minor touches to this account, plus the three great summaries and the Ananias and Sapphira incident. While the summaries are typical of Luke's method they are unusually long for him and they contain Semitisms (like $\epsilon\pi\iota \tau\omicron \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron = \text{N}\overline{\text{T}} \overline{\text{I}} \overline{\text{S}}$ 2:47) and so they may not be simply editorial additions.

Trocme's theory about the existence of a group

of 'perfect ones' (parfaits) within the church at Jerusalem would seem - as he himself admits - to be highly speculative. But he seems to make a valid point about the details of chapter 1: while Luke has 'written up' the whole in his own style there are signs of the use of sources: In the story of the 'bad end' of Judas for example, 'our author would not have transcribed one of those foreign words which he avoided (Akeldama) if he had not found it in a source.*

* The point about the Aramaic words ^{ܡܕܢܐ} ^{ܫܡܝܢ} seems a 'very palpable hit' in favour of a written source. How then does Haenchen view it? In his commentary on this passage he notes that 'the author Luke is writing 'who did not have the advantage of a footnote at his disposal'. Peter - if these were his very words - would not need to translate into Greek! This too is a valid point. But what about the translation itself? Haenchen writes 'Not that Luke invented it all! He was surely not the first to tell of the divine punishment of Judas! Here the effect of Palestinian tradition is seen! He also took over the application of passages from the psalms - in fact from Hellenistic Christianity. Finally the statement that Matthias and not Barsabbas was chosen as an apostle by lot will derive from a

footnote continued:

tradition!' The unanswered question is 'was this a written or an oral tradition?' The point made by Trocme is surely strong evidence for a written tradition at this point.

So it is probable that he laid before him a brief account of the death of the traitor, consisting of several words of v 16 and the essential parts of verses 18 - 20.

Trocme¹ concludes that the account of the organisation of the church given in the first chapter of Acts "corresponds in several ways to the rules observed in various Jewish groups of the period for the selection of leaders and their relationship with the community. In particular, the 'Manual of Discipline' of Qumran and the 'Damascus Document', have revealed the existence of circles where the division of members into classes, by means of a quite strict hierarchy, recalls the organisation of the Christian community mentioned in Acts 1:13-26. We are dealing with general similarities which reveal a similar attitude of mind, rather than with a direct relationship. But these links attest the very Jewish character of the inner life of the Jerusalem church which Luke reveals in the Book of Acts. It is therefore in Palestinian tradition that one must look for the origin of these various stories. The problem of their historicity remains, but in quite other terms than those imagined by someone like Loisy."*

* Trocme: p.200

Before attempting any summing up of the various views discussed, let us take a look at the problem of the Day of Pentecost: this is clearly a vital question, for the Book of Acts is founded on the theme 'You shall receive power....' - and clearly Luke believed that the Pentecost event was crucial in this process.

We take as our starting point the discussion of Trocmé: (pp 201-206) He observes that Luke knew all about 'speaking in tongues' because he describes it in the Cornelius story (10:46 - also 19:6) 'We may therefore put on one side the idea that he misunderstood a source which described a phenomenon of this kind, and clumsily mutilated it by giving it the sense of a linguistic miracle.'

Nor is it legitimate to suppose that the twelve - or the disciples - expressed themselves in a single language, whose supernatural character was shown in that it was immediately understood by everyone, just like their own native languages. This is contradicted by ἑτέρας γλώσσας in v 4. So Luke is in fact describing a multi-linguistic miracle.

However, Peter's defence of the believers

* C.E. Raven in 'The Creator Spirit' speaks of 'a wordless cry of exultation.' (p 241)

against the charge of drunkenness fits in with 'glossolalia' and not with the 'multi-lingual miracle.' As Paul warned the Corinthians, it would make the ἰδιῶται ἢ ἑπαιστωταὶ say that they were mad (1 Cor 14:23). Moreover, Luke himself connects the gift of the spirit at Pentecost with the phenomenon of tongues: 'Can any one forbid water for baptising these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' asks Peter at the end of the Cornelius story. (10:46)

There is too a striking similarity to the language used by Philo to describe the voice of God on Sinai: 'A voice sounded forth out of the midst of the fire which had flowed from heaven, a most marvellous and awful voice, the flame being endowed with an articulate speech in a language familiar to the hearers, which expressed its words with such clearness that the people seemed to be seeing it rather than hearing it.' But, this notable linguistic parallel notwithstanding, the closest affinity of the Pentecost story is with the account of the tower of Babel. Pentecost is Babel in reverse.*

* References in Beg. 5:114-115 for parallels in the writings of Philo, Josephus, and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs'. On any view, there is some community of ideas.

"Luke used a source in which men of all nations received a new language on the Day of Pentecost, in which they were able to praise God with one voice.....a most impressive case of speaking with tongues, no doubt the first of all, was, in Luke's source, interpreted in the light of two Old Testament passages. Our author, who wished to show the universality of the Christian mission, was at pains to emphasize the differences between this event, over half a century old, and the glossolaly which he knew in his own surroundings."* He also added Peter's speech (2:22-36), the list of nations in 2:7-11, and the idea of foreign languages in 2:6b (~~ἡ~~ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ). As for the baffling list of nations present, it could be explained as a list of the Jewish synagogues which existed at Antioch. This would explain why the nations come from a zone in which Antioch forms the centre, why Syria and Cilicia are missing, and why Judeea occurs between Mesopotamia and Cappadocia.

In the 'dark backward and abysm of time' which forms the New Testament period, one hypothesis is often as good as another! Why should the author have applied a list of expatriate Jewish synagogues

* Trocme p 204.

in Antioch to the history of the church in Jerusalem?* Haenchen, on the other hand, deletes 'Judaëa' along with the 'Cretans and Arabians' and so is left with exactly 12 peoples. Trocmé replies that correct method requires us to retain 'Ιουδαίαν' (T. p.204).

It is time to leave these arguments over detail and form some kind of estimate of the story which Luke tells in Acts 1-5.

Firstly, as is obvious, he was less well informed about what happened in the earliest church than he was, for example, about what happened when Paul was brought before Gallio at Corinth. But he did discover traditions which originated in Palestine and must - so we deduce from the Aramaic 'Akaḏama' - have reached him at least partly in written form.

Haenchen insists that we must begin with the question 'Was wollte Lukas?' - 'what was Luke trying to do?'. We suspect that one thing he wanted to do was to give an account of what actually happened. There is a huge 'non-sequitur' in the view that seeks to explain everything in the book by the author's desire to impress and inspire his own generation. 'The datum of the Day of Pentecost

* H. p 132.

is in no sense an old tradition' says Haenchen (p 136) Why not? If Luke drew on Palestinian traditions for such items as the choice of Matthias, the fate of Judas, the healing of the lame man, and the fate of Ananias and Sapphira, why should he not have done the same for Pentecost? We agree with Trocmé - 'our author has not totally invented any of the stories in his book.'

Amateur historian Luke may have been, but he was a long way from the novelletish attitude of the author of the Acts of Paul and Thekla, and still further from that hagiographical enthusiasm that canonised the 'Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne.'*

Haenchen declares that there was 'no old and uniform tradition' (keine alte und einheitliche 'Überlieferung') about the coming of the Holy Spirit: he points to the story in John 20:22 where the risen Lord 'ἐνεψύχησε' on the disciples and imparted the spirit to them. Again there is a 'non-sequitur': no uniform tradition does not entail no old tradition, though it may indicate

* What acid tests are to be applied '-asks Dom David Knowles -' to Charlemagne, to a place name or a consul who have all arrived at some kind of liturgical commemoration?' (Great Historical Enterprises - p 9)

that the oldest tradition is hard to come by. Nor is it inconceivable - and we cheerfully prepare to face the charge of 'psychologising' - that the earliest church did have some kind of communal experience of religious ecstasy which led to an outburst of 'tongues' and that this corporate experience became in the tradition, a kind of 'landmark event', like - for example - Wesley's famous visit to the house in Aldersgate Street. Interpreted as a kind of reversal of the verdict of Babel, this first new awareness of corporate fellowship was developed - by the source (Trocme) or by Luke himself (Wendt) into a 'multi-lingual miracle' which reflects the popular religious psychology of Luke, just as John 20:19 reflects the more subtle religious psychology of the fourth evangelist. It is not to be denied that the author seeing the Pentecost story as a 'landmark event' has written it up as a key incident in his history, rather like the long march of Chairman Mao, or the 'Storming of the Bastille'. Both these 'mythological' incidents, we may recall, actually took place.

This view is reinforced by the observation that a Semitic and Palestinian colouring does appear elsewhere in Acts 1-5. The caves at Qumran were indeed a 'windfall' to students of the

New Testament, and it was doubtless inevitable that all kinds of parallels should be sought between the Qumran community and the early church.

Certainly it is highly speculative to draw any detailed parallel between the communal life of the church and the regulations which appear in the 'Manual of Discipline.' Haenchen writes: 'In reality the act of Barnabas lived on in people's memory because it was extraordinary, an exception and not the rule. Thereupon, indeed, there disappears the 'primitive christian communism of love' (Troeltsch) which is said to have reigned in the beginning in the Jerusalem church, and with the collapse of which, the financial difficulty of that church began.' (H.p 191) He further notes that Mary, the mother of John Mark, retained her own house, and comments, 'the total surrender of property is only possible, when an unmarried community lives partly or completely in a monastic way.... Family life and monastic life exclude each other.'*

While family life may well be impossible in a monastery, other forms of communal living are perfectly feasible. Apart from the 'kibbutz' or the 'collective farms', the left wing of the

* H p. 192.

reformation produced groups like the Hutterites and the Old Order Amish Mennonites who, to this day, practise a form of community living. Moreover, the story of Ananias and Sapphira taken at face value, shows that surrender of property was voluntary, and not compulsory: Peter reminded Ananias that he could have retained his own property and committed no sin. Granted that Luke has idealised the founding fathers, and granted that there was no monastic community like that of Qumran - yet can the tradition that 'they had all things common' be dismissed as a 'creation ex nihilo'? The stories of Barnabas, and of Ananias, do indicate that some people at least handed over their property to the new movement. Mary the mother of John Mark may well have retained the legal title to her house - someone had to hold it - and yet allowed it to be 'open house' for a still small, yet closely-knit, community which lived in communal exultation as it waited for the return of its Lord. In social living, as indeed in matters of faith and order, the earliest church was, we suspect, very much more informal than its fellow idealists at Qumran; and no doubt more informal than Pharisaic Judaism as a whole. But inarticulate convictions are not less deeply felt than is thought-out theology.

As for the tradition of the double trial of

the apostles: our verdict on this will depend on this will depend on our estimate of the theory of Jeremias about Rabbinic law. Has he succeeded in showing that there was a legal process of warning followed by punishment, to which the account given in Acts 4-5 corresponds? Here we become deeply involved in the mazes of Mishnah and Talmud.

Haenchen says flatly that 'the warning referred only to murder cases and had to be given by two witnesses...'* Jeremias however, has already foreseen and attempted to forestall this argument: 'The indispensability of the 'warning', he declares 'referred not only to the infliction of the death penalty but also flogging.'**

Evidence to decide this point lies obscurely hidden in the Babylonian Talmud. Strack⁴ Billerbeck declares: (1:810) 'As an Israelite could only be punished if the ^{Torah} had explicitly prescribed a punishment for his misdeed, and if he had been warned before he acted..the theory required for the commandments themselves proof from the Torah, firstly that they had been given in the form of a warning - that is, as prohibitions - and

1/
Torah/

* Here he follows B. Reicke: Glauben und Leben der Urgemeinde p 105.

** ZNW: 36: p 209.

also that a punishment was prescribed with them.' Hence the limitation of the commandment 'Thou shalt not steal' at Exodus 20:15 to kidnapping, so that it might serve as a warning for the same offence as officially dealt with at ~~Exodus~~ Exodus 21:16. Was the warning, however, attached to non-capital crimes? Bo Reicke seems to think that the flogging was often inflicted along with the warning - "The apostles received a warning (at 5:40) which was made even more memorable with the aid of a whip." (Reicke p 106) That was how the recalcitrant son was dealt with: "'They warn him before three and flog him. If he goes and repeats the offence, they judge him before twenty-three.'" (Sanhedrin 8:4) Here the warning is clearly included in the flogging and vice-versa." But Jeremias has already noticed this point and conceded it with a footnote (p209). Thus in John 5:10 the lame man is told that he should not carry his mattress on the Sabbath. 'First the warning must take place, and only then does the question of culpability arise.' (Schlatter:Sprache und Heimat p 386)

All that one can say with certainty is that the account given in Acts is not incompatible with the evidence of the Mishnah and Talmud, when we bear in mind, firstly, that we cannot be certain about the procedure followed by the Sanhedrin

before AD70, and secondly, we cannot be sure whether it would be bound by its rules or procedure. Luke's account is clearly legendary in part. Even if we rationalise the angel of 5:19 and regard it as a human messenger, clearly the tradition regarded the deliverer as a supernatural agent*.

Nor can much guidance be got from the Jewish tradition itself. This is indeed extremely hostile to Jesus, but its evidence is legendary and indeed scurrilous. We are told that Jesus Ha-Notzri had five disciples, called Mattai, Nezer,

* What is the relation of these escapes to the one related in Acts 12:1-17? This clearly depends on some kind of written source, for the angel who 'struck Peter in the side' (12:7) is much too 'solid' a being for a Lucan angel. The latter's angels are heavenly creatures. It is also to be granted that Luke's angel indicates a 'theological' as well as a 'historical' motive. He sees in the escape a providential deliverance by God. Does this destroy his claim to have left a historical record? No more than the weird, dripping figure of the rain god, intervening to save the Roman army, diminishes the evidential value of the column of Marcus Aurelius.

Naqûi, Buni and Todah. (Bab.San 43:)* All this proves is that Jewish tradition disliked the followers of the Nazarene as much as it did the man himself! And if the names given are distortions of Matthew, Luke, Andrew, John and Thaddaeus, then they could derive from knowledge of the canonical gospels.

So it would seem best to suspend judgement on the theory of the double trial. There would seem no reason, however, to doubt the tradition that a group of the believers, led by Peter, were in fact tried by the Sanhedrin. Luke's apologetic motives are clear: he wishes to present the pioneers in a heroic light, and he artificially presents the dispute as one about resurrection - a point on which the Pharisaic party agreed with the followers of 'the Way'. Yet even this version of events may not lack historical truth. We agree with Reicke (p 76): 'It is not to be doubted that the priests and Sadducees really wished to find out the religious basis of the case in question. They

* J. Jocz (The Jewish people and Jesus Christ) p57, quoting Klausner, notes that 'The Talmud authorities rarely allude to events which took place in the period of the second temple.' They do not even mention Judas Maccabaeus!

were likely to stamp any Messianic movement as politically dangerous on principle, and to suppress it: this can be concluded from the memories of Theudas and Judas the Galilean in 5:36f. Even the opposition of the Sadducees to belief in the resurrection (compare 23:5) may be partly dependent on political considerations, as was in general their dislike of the prophetic books, precisely because they knew from experience that intensive eschatological imaginings led uneasily to unrest.*

We sum up our conclusion about Acts 1-5 in the words of Erich Auerbach (p53). He is distinguishing between Saga and History: 'In the Sagas of the Martyrs, determined and fanatical victims of persecution face equally determined and fanatical persecutors: a very complicated - and that means historically true - situation, such as we see reflected in the letter concerning the Christians which the 'persecutor' Pliny sent to Trajan - this can never be found in saga... It is so hard to write history that most historians are compelled to make concessions to the 'saga-technique.' (Mimesis p56)**

* Reicke p.76 -77

** Our own translation. We have not had access to the English edition of Mimesis. But see additional note p.519.

We have only one reservation on these wise words: the urbane and humane Pliny would not have looked so urbane and humane to the Christian deaconesses ('ministrae') whom he put to the torture. Would not their recollections of the event - their 'worm's eye view' - have spoken (rightly?) of stubborn persecutors? The women on the rack were in no position to appreciate Pliny's urbanity.

It is clear that in Acts 1-5 Luke has been compelled to make concessions to the saga-technique. But he has still presented a recognisable picture of what actually happened. History simplified need not be history falsified. *

* Auerbach p 53 Die Sage ordnet den Stoff in eindeutiger Weise: sie schneidet ihn aus dem sonstigen Weltzusammenhang aus, so dass diese nicht verwirrend eingreifen kann, und sie kennt nur eindeutig festgelegte, von wenigen einfachen Motiven bestimmten Menschen....

Certainly Luke sets out his material in 'eindeutiger Weise', but his habit of giving lists of names - of disciples (1;13) priests (4:6) and Hellenists, (6;5) surely indicates a desire to link his story with the contemporary world.

CHAPTER 5

STEPHEN AND THE HELLENISTS

Luke concludes the fifth chapter of Acts with one of his generalising and 'inspirational' comments: 'And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.' (5;42) After this it comes as a shock to discover, at the start of the next chapter, that 'The Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution; 'Nothing has so far been said about either Hellenists or Hebrews, and now the ideal peace of the primitive church is shattered by a communal dispute about financial and social problems.

The chronological indication is vague - ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις - and the phrase πληθυνόντων τῶν μαθητῶν may perhaps be intended as a kind of explanation of the difficulty that is about to be related. One thing is clear: the incident, however vaguely reported, is not likely to have been invented by Luke. It does not fit in with his plan and purpose, and the 'unedifying' fact of community discord does not serve, as did the fate of Ananias and Sapphira, as a kind of cautionary tale of 'awful warning.'

Yet the careful reader must conclude that there is more in the incident than meets the eye. To deal with the problem of widows 'relief seven

'diakonoi' are appointed. They all have Greek names which are given with every appearance of verisimilitude. They are therefore - presumably - 'Hellenists' while the last named, Nicolaus, is 'a proselyte of Antioch.' This curious detail allows us to assume with reasonable confidence that the other six were Jews by birth. Thus with the seven Hellenist deacons appointed to look after social welfare, justice will presumably be done and be seen to be done.

Something very different happens, however, for the first of the seven, Stephen - 'a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit' devotes himself, not to social work, but to militant evangelism. His aggressive approach - 'ἐποίει τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα μεγάλα ἐν τῷ λαῷ' - leads to a confrontation with the synagogue of the 'so-called' Freedmen, and those of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia. These bring Stephen before the Council and put forward 'false witnesses' to accuse him of saying that 'Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place.' Stephen then makes a very long speech, at the end of which he is stoned: as H.J.Cadbury remarked; the victim may have been as uncertain as we are about the legality of the proceedings! Then there follows a precise chronological note: ἐν ἑκάνη τῇ ἡμέρᾳ

a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. (8;1) We have come a long way from the original *ἑλληνιστῶν* which set off the chain of events, and if the Hellenistic widows were scattered with the rest they were doubtless unable to draw their pensions. Stephen was buried by 'devout men' and (the blood of the martyrs being the seed of the church) one of those present at his death was 'a young man named Saul' (7;58)

Many much-debated questions arise from this famous narrative: for example; who were the Hellenists and who were the Hebrews? Were the Seven Deacons simply intended to care for the elderly, or was there a deeper split in the primitive community? Is the figure of Stephen historical, and if so, what, if anything can be learned about his beliefs from the long speech which is attributed to him? Is there any link between the Hellenists - or the Hebrews - and any other known group within first century Judaism: the Samaritans, the Essenes, or the covenanters of Qumran?*

* Who may indeed be related to, if not identical with, the Essenes - Sir Godfrey Driver (The Judaeen Scrolls) dissenting.

What was the relationship between the Hellenist movement and the Gentile mission? Was Stephen in his thinking a forerunner of Paul, or an isolated figure whose chief point was the negative one of opposition to the temple? Was Saul of Tarsus really present at the death of Stephen, and if so, what effect did this have on his life and thought? Lastly, how close is Luke's account to the historical course of events? Is it schematised and tendentious, and are its alleged shortcomings the result of the author's ignorance, or bias, or both?

The major difficulty is that, as with so much ancient history, we have little to go on except the narrative of Acts itself. The confirmation of archaeology is general but rarely specific. The letters of Paul say little - but not nothing - about the period in question. Jewish tradition replied to the victorious new movement with some denigration and much silence. The documents from the Dead Sea Caves have offered much that is great value, but their ambiguity is such that while Professor O. Cullmann links Qumran with the Hellenists, Professor M. Black connects the Dead Sea Community with the Hebrews! Nor do Roman historians offer much help, for the succinct comment of Tacitus: 'repressaque in praesens exitiabilis superstitio, rursum erumpebat, non

modo per Iudaeam, originem eius mali, sed per urbem etiam....' (Ann.15;44) seems to imply persecution in Judaea, but nothing precise can be concluded from it.

We therefore intend to investigate the following questions: Who were the Hellenists and who were the Hebrews? Who was Stephen and what was his message? How did Luke compose his narrative and what did he intend to say?

YET 'ONCE MORE, WHO WERE THE HELLENISTS?

Prof. C.F.D. Moule began an article on this subject (Expository Times LXX, 1958) with an ironical quotation from an 18th century scholar: 'acres inter viros doctissimos sunt contentiones, quoniam in Actis Apostolorum vocentur Ελληνισται'.

Prof. Moule himself was heard in a lecture to summarise the possibilities thus:

1. Greek speaking Jews.
2. Proselytes.
3. Liberal 'Gentilising' Jews.
4. Hellen~~is~~-plain Gentiles.

He concluded that the Hellenists were Jews who spoke Greek only, and knew no Semitic tongue; like Anglo-Welshmen, or Irishmen without the Gaelic, they were no less committed for that reason to the ideals of their fathers.

H.J. Cadbury, who took the view that Hellenists were in fact plain Gentiles, (possibility 4 above) gave an invaluable summary of the evidence in 'Beginnings of Christianity,' V, Note 7.

The word, he says, should be derived from the verbal form ἑλληνίζω : the noun thus formed might be expected to mean 'one who is an enthusiast for Greek culture' or 'one who apes Greek manners'. Cadbury refers to the verbs Μηδίζω, Περσίζω, Σικελίζω in the same sense.* However, these words do not seem to have noun forms parallel to the expression 'Hellenists'. The logical meaning might seem to be 'Greek speaking Jews'. 'Hebrews' and 'Hellenists' are then two parties within the mass of Ἰουδαῖοι : the former spoke Aramaic and the latter Greek. This is the traditional, and at first sight sensible interpretation. Luke was sensitive to distinctions of language: Claudius Lysias was amazed to find that Paul could speak Greek, while the apostle chose to address the mob in Aramaic. The Lycaonian 'backwoodsmen' also hailed the missionaries in their own vernacular, and Luke the stylist does his best to

* Thus T.W. Manson sought to prove that the 'Pharisees' were 'Persianizers'.

remove or explain Latin and Semitic words where he can.

But in spite of this Cadbury claims that the Hellenists were plain Gentiles after all. The Greek names could have been borne by Gentiles, or by Palestinian or expatriate Jews.* Secondly, the term 'Hebrews' is not usually employed in a strictly linguistic sense. It more generally means quite simply 'Israelites'. 'In Acts 6 Hebrews would seem to mean simply Jews spoken of from a Jewish standpoint and with a view to contrast, and 'Hellenists' would mean those who were not Jews at all but outsiders - Gentiles (as at its later occurrences, or in other words it is a synonym for Ἑβραῖοι or Ἕλληνας . (Beg V p 65)

But if this is correct what has happened to Luke's account of the Gentile mission? What of the Cornelius incident, and of the nameless men of Cyprus and Cyrene who ἐλθόντες εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ἐδάδουν καὶ ** πρὸς τοὺς Ἕλληνας εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν Κύριον Ἰησοῦν.?

* Does not the exception - Nicolaus the proselyte - prove that the rest were Jews by birth?

** And why the crucial καὶ if Gentiles had in fact been in the church from the beginning?

Cadbury answers that the author did not intend to show a gradual evolution towards the Gentile mission, as is usually thought. 'My own impression is that the author of Acts, for all his attention to lines of development,...has nevertheless not attempted to portray a consistent picture of an originally Jewish and Judaeen Christianity systematically expanding to other lands and groups by definite and repeated steps, but rather to emphasise the acceptance of the gospel by non-Jews as a repeated phenomenon, which gradually broke down all opposition, not as one event which had a single beginning. 'To demonstrate this, Cadbury takes the events recorded in Acts in their reverse order.

- a) 'The missionary journey of Acts 13-14 is regarded as an innovation in spite of the conversion of Cornelius.'
- b) 'A little earlier at Antioch,...the gospel... was ultimately preached to non-Jews by certain men of Cyprus and Cyrene. But it is not explicitly stated that Gentiles were first converted at Antioch..the innovation both in Samaria and at Antioch was regarded as geographical rather than racial.'
- c) 'The story of Cornelius...was a notable instance of Gentile conversion.'

- d) 'Still earlier in Acts comes Philip's conversion of the eunuch...Nothing is said as to whether he was either a Jew or a Gentile..It is possible that Luke regarded the eunuch as a Gentile, and ranked him as a notable convert from heathendom'.
e) Last in the list is the story of Pentecost.

This, says Cadbury, implies that both Jews and Gentiles were among the earliest group of converts: for the word Ἰουδαῖοι, should be omitted from 2;5 (Ἦσαν δὲ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴν κατὰ τοὺς ἡμέρας Ἰουδαῖοι) but retained in the list of nations given at 2;10. Thus both Jews and Gentiles were in the crowd at the Day of Pentecost.

It is clear that Cadbury's equation of 'Hellenists' with 'Gentiles' depends partly on the deletion, made mainly on text-critical grounds, of the word Ἰουδαῖοι in 2;5. Another doubtful point is this: If Luke meant to refer to Hellenes (Ἑλλήνας) why did he not say so? He uses this term at 11;21 - at least it seems that he does, for several manuscripts read Ἑλλήνισται instead! It looks as if the 'acres contentiones' about the meaning of the term 'Hellenists' go right back to the early manuscripts: for the third corrector of the Codex Sinaiticus altered the reading in this very place.

Yet the weight of the evidence seems to be strongly against Cadbury's theory. After all, the text as it stands tells us that the Seven Deacons were selected precisely to put a stop to discrimination against the Hellenist group. The believers were told to select ' *ἑξ ἑκαστοῦ τῆς ἑλληνιστικῆς ἐκκλησίας* ' and therefore, Stephen must have been a Hellenist if anybody was. But he begins his speech with the salutation ' *ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατέρες* ' - as Jewish an idiom as 'patres conscripti' is Roman - and proceeds to present a long resumé of Israel's history from Abraham to Jesus Christ. Stephen was certainly no Gentile.

Moreover, if Stephen was a Jew of some kind - as the tone of his disputes with the various synagogues suggests - then he would seem to have been a Jew by birth: that is the commonsense implication of the reference to 'Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch'. He only, like Claudius Lysias who had paid for his Roman citizenship, was not an Israelite by birth.

The Hellenists, therefore, were not simply Gentiles: but it seems too simple to regard them simply as 'Greek-speaking Jews'. Various attempts have been made to link them with specific groups of 'nonconformists' within Judaism.

Marcel Simon,* who rejects Cadbury's theory for reasons similar to the ones given above, points out that in 2 Maccabees the term 'Hellenismos' has 'a disparaging nuance'. It means 'Hellenisers' in the same sense as the authors of 'Tracts for the Times' were described as 'Romanisers': they were deviationists, Jews who spoke Greek indeed but were much more seriously unsound in their basic doctrines. They may be linked with the odd sect of the 'Hellenians' (Ἑλληνοί) mentioned by Justin Martyr. This group should be linked neither with Helen the companion of Simon Magus, nor with Hillel the liberal Rabbi. The Hellenians of Justin are none other than the Hellenists of Acts 6;1, for the endings - ianoi and - istai are closely related. It is likely that Hellenianoi is to be interpreted as 'Followers of the Greeks' and consequently is just another way of expressing what is meant by 'Hellenistai': 'the first as well as the second of these terms was used to describe those Jews who followed, or were suspected of following the ways of the Greeks: i.e. of the heathen.' (Simon p 18)

Simon concludes: 'About the specifically Greek origin of this heresy we must not be too

* St. Stephen and the Hellenists p.12.

categorical. It may, of course, have been brought forth, at least in part, by Greek influence, but it is not to be excluded that the word had a less precise connotation, and meant, in the mouths of those who coined it and applied it to their adversaries, simply 'godless'. Whoever strayed from the paths of Pharisaic orthodoxy and normal Judaism would be suspected of following the Greeks, that is to say the pagans: what exactly the heresy of Stephen did consist in will appear more closely from an analysis of his speech' - (p 18-19)

The view that the Hellenists were a group of 'left-wing' or dissenting Jews had much to command it. This theory was worked out in detail by Prof. O. Cullmann who attempted to establish a 'triangular' relationship between Stephen's group, non-conformist Judaism as evidenced at Qumran, and the group which produced the author of the fourth gospel. All these people had one thing in common: they were opposed in principle to the Jerusalem temple. The mysterious Hellenists are referred to in John 4:38, where it is said that 'other men (*ἄλλοι*) laboured, and you have entered into their labours.'

Before turning to Stephen's speech however, we will consider the view of Prof. Moule, that

the Hellenists were Jews who spoke Greek only.

'The Acts story can make sense as it stands, on the assumption that Ἑλληνομαίης and Ἑβραῖος mean, in this particular context, what I have proposed.' Professor Moule rejects the view - as old as Salmasius - that the Hellenists were proselytes. The reference to Nicolaus as a proselyte is decisive against this. He rejects the theory of Cadbury as well: 'To accept this means not only postulating the synonymity of two distinct words but also rewriting the Acts narrative, which as it stands, has scarcely room for Gentiles at this stage.'

Professor Moule thinks that the theory which regards the Hellenists as Jewish 'modernists' or 'Hellenisers' as 'highly speculative'. Stephen may have been a member of some such Jewish sect before conversion to Christianity, but 'I doubt whether purely philological considerations are as weighty as considerations of context....the only clear datum is that, in the Acts Ἑλληνομαίης and Ἑβραῖος are contrasted.....All I am asking is whether it is not reasonable here, with reference to the situation in Jerusalem, to define 'Greek-speaking' as meaning 'speaking (only) Greek', in contrast to Jews who also spoke a Semitic language; and whether, on this showing, the story

in the Acts after all requires very little reading between the lines, and very little rewriting.'

Professor Moule argues - we think rightly - that there is nothing inherently unlikely in the story of friction between two language groups, culminating in the dispute about the support of widows. 'It seems to me intelligible that this should have been met by the appointment of seven men all with Greek names and all probably $\epsilon\lambda\lambda\eta\gamma\epsilon$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$ to organise the dole. Either the entire Christian community made the generous gesture of trusting these seven, although drawn from the wronged ~~section~~ only, to deal fairly with the Hebraic group as well: or it was assumed that the 'Hebrews' needed no special attention and would go on smoothly as before. In either case, the Twelve would be relieved of the distraction that had begun to threaten their proper vocation.' (6;2-4)

One of the oddest points in the narrative of Acts is the statement that when persecution broke out after the death of Stephen, all the believers fled 'except the apostles'. (8;1) It has been suggested that Luke is less than candid here: in fact, the heretical Hellenists were expelled, while the Hebrew Christian community, who were pro-temple and prepared to accept the Torah, were left in peace. Professor Moule tries to vindicate

the text as it stands: 'the apostles, coming from Galilee and never having begun to live in Jerusalem till after the resurrection, may have been the only male Jews never to have joined a synagogue in the city. Diaspora Jews, even as Christians, may well have found it easier to be accepted into one or another of the synagogues than Galileans - too local to be genuine diaspora members, yet too alien to fit in elsewhere. And if they did not belong to any synagogue, they may well have been the only Christians who escaped the peculiarly bitter attacks which are directed against renegades within a community...all the other local Christians - even the Ἑβραῖοι - may well have been attacked when the Galilean twelve escaped for the time being.'

This attempt to save the credit of the narrative of Acts seems to overlook the fact that it was precisely the apostles who were under fire in Acts 1-5. They were marked men who had made the Sanhedrin look ridiculous, and so it is a priori improbable that they would have been allowed to 'lie low' simply because the persecution was carried on from within Greek-speaking synagogues.

Professor Moule makes two further points: Firstly, if we can suppose that Stephen was connected with the group who received the Epistle

to the Hebrews, then he may be one of the 'leaders' referred to in 13;7 in that epistle. But even if the tradition that the readers of the letter were 'Hebrews' is wrong, it is clear that they were thought to speak a Semitic language - i.e. the term was understood in a linguistic sense.

More weighty is the reference to Chrysostom, who in Hom:14, refers to the Hellenists as ' τοὺς Ἑλληνοῖς φθεγγόμενοι' and in Hom.25, comments on Acts 11;21 that the hearers of the gospel did not ' εἰδέναι Ἑβραϊστί '. Furthermore Chrysostom refers to the Hebrews as ' οἱ βαθεῖς Ἑβραῖοι '-the real Hebrews- 'implying again that it was possible to apply Ἑβραῖος - even if in a shallower sense - to the Hellenists.'

Professor Moule rests his case on a common-sense interpretation of the text. 'The context is the surest guide to the meaning, and in any case M. Simon admits that the term 'Hellenists' as used by Luke, includes all Greek-speaking Jews,' and that 'to the author of Acts, the word apparently had no other meaning.'

But if the Hellenists differed from their brethren in nothing save language, why did the appointment of the seven social workers lead to a religious pogrom? Did the Hellenist crisis have profounder implications than even Luke perceived?

Was there more to it than the question of widows' benefit? To substantiate this it will be necessary to look more closely at the speech of Stephen.

STEPHEN'S SPEECH

On any view this speech is a puzzle. It is extremely long (7;2-53), much of it does not seem very relevant to the question at issue, and it may perhaps be skipped by the contemporary if injudicious reader,*

* The views of George Bernard Shaw on the early chapters of Acts are also worth recording: 'One of the first things the apostles did with their miraculous power was to strike dead a wretched man and his wife who had defrauded them by holding some money back from the common stock. They struck people blind or dead without remorse, judging because they had been judged. Their doctrine did not contain a ray of that light which reveals Jesus as one of the redeemers of men from folly and error.' A quite intolerable young speaker delivered an oration to the council, in which he first inflicted on them a tedious sketch of the history of Israel, with which they were presumably as well acquainted as he, and then reviled them in the most insulting terms as 'stiff-necked and uncircumcised'. Finally, after boring them and annoying them to the utmost bearable extremity, he looked up and said that he saw the heavens opened and Christ standing on the right hand of God. This was too much. They threw him out of the city and stoned him to death. It was a severe way of dealing with a tactless and conceited bore, but was pardonable and human in comparison to the slaughter of Ananias and Sapphira.'

(Preface to Androcles and the Lion p.LXXIV)

This is magnificent but it is not criticism. The reader will have no difficulty in picking out the tendentious epithets employed. One critical point is worthy of notice: Shaw has perceived that little is said in the 'kerygma' about the tradition of the words of Jesus.

rather like some of the dated dialogue in the Waverley novels. Such was certainly not the intention of Luke, for ancient readers enjoyed a 'set-piece speech' for its rhetorical entertainment value!

We must ask several questions about 'this tedious sketch of the history of Israel' (as George Bernard Shaw described it). Firstly, was it a free composition by Luke, or did he have sources, written or oral? Secondly, did these sources go back to Stephen himself, or his followers, or to some entirely unrelated group? Thirdly, (if we give a positive answer to questions 1 and 2), what can we conclude from this about the beliefs of Stephen and the Hellenists?

It seems to be generally admitted that here at least Luke was using a written source of some kind. This is indeed disputed by Loisy, who ascribes the entire speech to his editor ('rédacteur'). 'The editor has not even troubled to add a touch which corresponds to the situation, as he did previously for the speeches of Peter, and as he will do again for the other speeches which he will interpolate in his book.*. The editor has conceived of this (concluding) invective not only as a conclusion

* Les Actes des Apôtres: p 347.

suited to the speech which it brings to an end, but also as the incident most likely to provoke the furious riot in which Stephen will perish.* These views, however, depend on Loisy's 'conspiracy theory' about the composition of Acts as a whole: 'the first form (of the book), which we owe to Luke, was an exact narration, devoid of any apologetic intent. This was unfortunately mutilated by an incompetent editor, who was anxious, not to defend historical truth, but to prove that Christianity was the sole true Judaism'**. Loisy's theory was thus the reverse of that favoured by many source-critics: instead of a historian of debateable competence using sources of varying value, he presented an original pristine Luke whose work, without spot or wrinkle, was ruined by a tendentious redactor. But Loisy saw clearly one point, that the views expressed in Stephen's speech are at variance with much else in the book: in particular with the question of the rightness or wrongness of the building of the temple:

'It is in the passage about David that the editor has concealed all the artifice of his

* Loisy p 347.

** Loisy p 341, 344.

exegesis...what is said about him is intended to conceal the approval given by God himself to the idea of building a temple, and the divine promise which assured the perpetual future of the temple just as much as that of the Davidic dynasty: (but) the violent peroration, which follows the quotation from Isaiah, evidently classified the building of the temple as one of the acts of infidelity of which Israel has been guilty from the beginning!*

Loisy then proceeds to criticise the critics who have tried to minimise the "condemnation of the temple by saying that the speech only intended to point out its relative value." The author (in Loisy's view the editor) had no such moderate intentions. "He considers that the tabernacle was sufficient....What he really believes, and what he wishes to prove, is that Solomon was of another mind than was David, and that he erred in not holding fast to the 'place of encampment' which David found for the tabernacle on Mount Zion." Loisy has certainly shown that there is more in Stephen's speech than met the eye of Bernard Shaw! Hostility to the temple is certainly one of its major topics. If we regard Loisy's theory of an

* Loisy p 341,344.

original Acts disgracefully mutilated by a biased editor as a 'hypothese gratuite et arbitraire' (to use his own words) then we may well wonder whether the anti-temple view expressed in the speech go back to pre-Lucan times, and perhaps to Stephen himself.*

It may be helpful to make a summary of the speech. It is curiously unbalanced in its treatment of Israel's history, and in this reminds us of the writer to the Hebrews, who runs out of time to 'tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and the prophets.' (Heb.12;32). Could there be a not very skilful abridgement in Stephen's speech as well?

* After all the Third Gospel is not anti-temple. It begins and ends in the temple, with the disciples 'blessing God' (24-57) just as Zechariah 'served as a priest before God' (1-8). Could this be the work of an unscrupulous Judaizing redactor? But Occam's razor applies also in the field of literary criticism: hypothetical editors should not be postulated unless absolutely necessary. Loisy's theory of an original entirely impartial Luke has the same motivation as those Shakespearean critics who ascribed all the bard's less inspired lines to an 'Inferior Hand'.

- v 2-8 Abraham: God tells him of the promised land-though he did not himself possess it - he had no 'inheritance - not even a foot's length. 'After his father died Abraham left Haran.
- v 9-15 Joseph: He was sold into Egypt, but 'God gave him favour and wisdom before Pharaoh.' He died, and was buried in Schechem.
- v 17-29 Moses: A new Pharaoh persecuted the people. Moses, who was 'instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' killed an Egyptian and fled to the land of Midian.
- v 30-34 God appeared to Moses 'in a flame of fire in a bush' - and declared, 'I am the God of your fathers.'
- v 35-41 The people rebelled against Moses and made a golden calf.
- v 42-43 God abandoned the people to the worship of the host of heaven. This is backed up by a quotation from Amos 5:25-27, which seems to be based on the LXX but which reads 'beyond Babylon' for 'beyond Damascus'.
- v 44-47 Tabernacle and Temple: The tabernacle was made at God's direction and accompanied the people to the promised land. It lasted until the time of David who 'asked leave to find a habitation (σκήνωμα) for the God of Jacob.'

'But it was Solomon who built a house for him.'

v 48-49 God does not dwell in houses made with hands: This assertion is supported by a quotation from Isaiah 66:1, which agrees in wording with a similar quotation in the Epistle of Barnabas.

v 51-53 You stiff-necked people! The hearers have done as their fathers did, who killed the prophets who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, whom they in turn have betrayed and murdered. They 'received the Law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.'

All kinds of theories have been put forward about this speech. It is clear at least that it definitely culminates in an attack on the temple as such. 'What house will you build for me? says the Lord, or what is my place of rest?' The implication seems clear, that God never approved of the temple at all. Whether this revolutionary idea derives from Loisy's redactor or from Stephen remains to be seen.

Haenchen's summary of the problem is, as often, very penetrating. The speech has, he remarks, led to the 'breaking of heads' (Kopfzerbrechen) among critics - and primarily

because the speech makes to attempt to answer the charges properly at all! Some argued that Stephen did try to answer the charge: F.C. Baur, for example, saw in the speech an exposition of God's mighty works and Israel's constant ingratitude, since this explanation (and others) did not seem very adequate, various critics sought to explain the problem thus: the original speech did in fact answer the charge, but was altered by the author of Acts who misunderstood his source. For example: 'W. Foerster (1953) tried to solve the problem like this: only the part about Moses goes back to Stephen. For the rest Luke repeats thoughts going back to Stephen's circle, which he learnt from Philip the evangelist.'

The second solution is to suppose that the speech is a unity, but that Stephen made no attempt to answer the charges against him. Thus Lake thought that religious and political pioneers never try to refute charges against themselves, but rather to present their own case at every opportunity. On the other hand Wellhausen supposed that the speech was 'a learned elaboration based on the LXX', while Preuschen followed Overbeck with the theory that 'proving that Israel was always ungrateful, the author prepares the way for the Gentile mission.' "All these scholars,"

concludes Haenchen*, "no longer understand the speech from the situation of Stephen (and thereby from tradition, but from the situation of the author of Acts (and thereby from its composition)."

The latter solution Haenchen finds congenial. Here, as often, he follows Martin Dibelius, who declared that 'Luke has inserted the speech into the story of the martyrdom of Stephen.' Like many others Dibelius was baffled by the apparent irrelevance of much of the speech: 'There cannot and need not be any question of an Aramaic original...' he declared, 'but we may well wonder whether the recital of facts was compiled by Luke; as in the case of the missionary speeches, so here also we would not wish to exclude the possibility of dependence on an older text, at least for that section which consists solely of a recital of facts: this would be the best explanation of its impartial tone. The polemic passages may be ascribed to Luke, who would of course have worked over the whole!'.** The inclusion of this long speech Dibelius sought to explain in terms of the author's literary purpose.. 'It needs to be appreciated not within the setting of martyrdom, but of the book as a whole.' It

* H. p 239.

** Essays p 169.

shows how far, inwardly, the speaker is from Judaism, but does so by means of devices, which are themselves borrowed from Judaism. That too is typical of the conflict between Christianity and Judaism which is introduced by this speech. It is not only Paul who has taken from the arsenal of Hellenistic Judaism the weapons which he directs against Judaism. The author of Acts does the same thing, and so introduces the conflict between Christianity and Judaism in a characteristic manner appropriate to the circumstances.*

* Literary and historical interests are not mutually exclusive. Luke may well have included the speech for literary reasons - to show the growth of conflict with Judaism - as he included the speeches at Athens and at Pisidian Antioch as typical examples of mission preaching in different circumstances. Indeed, a genuinely historical source, or summary of what Stephen or Paul said, would make his point even more clear if it was available. Bultmann's dictum holds good: 'Proof of the unity of a composition decides nothing about the possible use of sources.' (Mit der Nachweis der Stileinheit einer Komposition nichts über die etwaige verwendung von Quellen entschieden ist.' (N.T. Essays ed A.J.B. Higgins p 173)

Haenchen follows Dibelius in his own evaluation of the speech, and as so often, he pushes the ideas of Dibelius to extremes. The speech is a sermon from the Hellenistic synagogue - an edifying re-telling of the history of Israel's relations with God.* This, with the exception of a few verses ('mit Ausnahme weniger Verse') Luke took over en bloc, and made fit the situation of Stephen's trial with some additions and possibly abridgements. 'As long as we suppose that Luke recorded here the preaching of Stephen and his circle simply out of historical interest, we do not see the problem... whether Stephen really did make a speech at that time was irrelevant; the educated reader did not expect to have a speech in the original passed on to him...' 'At the time when Luke is writing his book, the Jews are the mighty and irreconcilable enemies of the Christians.' The anti-Jewish polemic found in the speech does not go back to the historical Stephen at all. 'What Luke describes here was an experience familiar to himself and to his church...It is the Jews who loose persecution after persecution against the Christians...Thus there appear the two pictures of Israel, which are never systematically reconciled by Luke: Israel

* H. p 239

with its role in the history of salvation, the people of the patriarchs, of Moses and the prophets, and Israel, the people always prone to worship idols and to slay the prophets.'*

Haenchen therefore thinks that nothing at all can be inferred about the beliefs of Stephen and the Hellenists from the speech as recorded in Acts. Once again we are confronted with too extreme an 'either -or' situation. Granted that Luke did not record the speech simply out of historical interest ('einfach aus historischem Interesse') - this need not mean that he had no historical interest at all. Granted too that the educated reader did not expect a speech to be a 'Hansard' or verbatim report, but it seems clear that he did expect a speech to give some idea of the views of the original speaker.** And the fatal flaw in Haenchen's argument appears in the phrase 'with the exception of a few words.' Having cast out the mote from the eye of Baur, Spitta, Wendt and the rest, he is left with a beam in his own. For his explanation seems as subjective as anyone

* H. p 241

** So much implied by Thucydides, 1:22 'I adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said.'

else's! ('To sum up, v 35, 37, 39-43, and 48-53 appear to be additions') Moreover verses 51-53 the climatic attack on the Jewish leaders - clearly come from the hand of Luke, who was truly not inexperienced in rhetoric.'

One has only to mark these verses with a pencil to see how subjective this is: v 37 is excluded because 'it stresses explicitly the conformity between Moses and the coming prophet like unto him.' Certainly it is a foreign body in any 'neutral' account of Israel's history, but it could also be an expression of Stephen's distinctive theology, and is the very verse which has been used, as we shall see, to link him with Samaritans! So too v 39-43, reproach Israel with idolatry by means of a quotation from the LXX. Since nobody would quote the Greek Bible to the Sanhedrin this must be deleted too. Again the non-sequitur.

If Hellenists spoke Greek only they would have had to quote the LXX, and if we suppose that the speech is not a transcript of court proceedings, but a general statement of what Stephen thought, then the problem disappears. As for the crucial verses 48-50, with their explicit claim that God never intended the Jews to build a temple at all - here Haenchen relies on Overbeck's claim that there are 'seams' between verses 43 and 44, which show

that Luke was making insertions into a synagogue sermon. This too is subjective, for anti-orthodox bias can be detected earlier on, in vl6, with its reference to Shechem.

Granted that Luke had literary motives for stressing the hostility of Judaism, one must still ask the question: why does he place his polemic against the temple in the mouth of Stephen and of nobody else? The reasonable answer would seem to be that he genuinely believed that Stephen had held such views. And if he did, then he was not alone in the Judaism of the first century. Scholars have sought to link both him and the Hellenists with various groups of Jewish dissenters, such as the Samaritans and the sectaries of Qumran.

THE HELLENISTS AND THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY

In two articles entitled 'A new approach to the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel' * Prof. O. Cullmann argued that 'Palestinian Judaism of the time of the New Testament was not so homogeneous as we are tempted to believe. 'At the end of the first century there existed in Palestine on the one hand the official Judaism, and on the other hand a more or less nonconformist Judaism which already

* E.T. LXXI (1959) p. 8 & 39.

included Hellenistic elements. 'It is therefore incorrect to distinguish only Palestinian Judaism and the Hellenistic Judaism. Palestinian Judaism itself was not the homogeneous entity it had been thought to be. The two types of primitive Christianity in Palestine correspond to the two types of Palestinian Judaism. 'This 'nonconformist' Judaism is linked by Professor Cullmann with the circle that produced the fourth gospel, with the Hellenists of Acts and with the community of Qumran.

Cullmann has long maintained that there was a Jewish Gnostic movement in Palestine itself at the beginning of the Christian era. This movement - of which the pseudo-Clementine writings give evidence - was itself the 'cradle of Christianity'. To this circle Stephen and his fellow-Hellenists belonged..They were more than Greek-speaking Jews: the verb *Ἑλληνίζω* "does not mean to speak Greek, but to live after the manner of the Greeks. The essential characteristic of this group is not the fact that several of its members originated from the Dispersion or that they were proselytes." The reference to Nicolaus proves that they were not simply proselytes and the fact that Barnabas - a typical Diaspora Jew - was not a Hellenist shows that this was not their distinctive feature either.

"These Hellenists must have existed already as a group and formed part of a group within Judaism." But what did they believe? Cullmann states frankly: 'Unfortunately Stephen did not leave behind any writing. It is therefore difficult to form a precise idea of the theological conceptions of this group which was so important for the primitive community. We have only the speech of Stephen in Acts, and in the speeches of Acts we find inevitably the ideas of Luke, who did not belong to this group. However the speech of Stephen contains such distinctive ideas which are different from the other ideas of the book of Acts, that we must admit that the author is using a direct source coming from that group' (our emphasis) Cullmann argued that the Hellenists must have agreed with Qumran over opposition to the temple, though the grounds of their opposition differed. But they were also linked with the Johannine circle, and a solution is suggested for the famous puzzle John 4;38: ἄλλοι κεκοπιάκασιν, καὶ ὑμεῖς εἰς τὸν κόπον αὐτῶν ἐσεληλύθατε.

And who were the mysterious ἄλλοι who laboured in Samaria before the apostles? 'It can only be a question of missionaries, 'says Cullmann -' who cleared the way for the apostles in Samaria. I

am convinced that the Book of Acts gives the answer. Chapter 8 recounts...that the missionary work in Samaria was begun by the Hellenists, in particular by Philip, one of the Seven, after their persecution, and that only afterwards the apostles Peter and John literally entered their field of work..... The real work had already been accomplished by these *ἑλλῆνες*, partisans of Stephen, for the most part anonymous.'

To sustain this interesting thesis Cullmann has to show that Stephen, the fourth evangelist and the community at Qumran held similar views about the Temple. Stephen 'puts the construction of the temple on the same level of Israel's unfaithfulness in resisting the Holy Spirit as the making of the golden calf!' (Thus the very point which Cullmann finds to be a clue to the attitude of Stephen, is regarded by Haenchen as an interpolation made by Luke!)

But is such a polemic against the temple found at Qumran? The answer is not quite clear. 'The Damascus document condemns only sacrifices offered in a state of impurity. 'The Manual of Discipline (9:3) seems to say that valid sacrifices are necessary in principle, while the 'War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness (2;5-6) appears to prescribe both dress and ritual for the offering

of sacrifice. Temple and sacrifice, therefore, had a place, for them, in the world to come. They were not against the temple on principle, but only against the usurping priesthood of Jerusalem, whose orders were invalid and whose personal life was a poor example. Now we see how our tantalising and fragmentary evidence can be interpreted in opposite ways. Haenchen declares that Stephen's alleged polemic against the temple had 'nothing at all to do with the 'no' which was the reply of the Qumran to the service of the Jerusalem temple...' Qumran objected to an incorrect calendar and unworthy priests. Stephen - and that means Luke - attacked the temple with the arguments of the Hellenistic Enlightenment (Hellenistische Aufklärung). Cullmann on the other hand agrees that Stephen and Qumran do not speak with one voice, but 'the long abstention from sacrifices, must sooner or later have given birth to the idea that sacrifices were not at all pleasing to God. 'In other words, the Dead Sea Community could well have provided a home for a man like Stephen. He appears as a kind of first century George Fox pushing the ideas of more moderate men to their apparently logical conclusion.

Cullmann seeks to find the missing link between Stephen and Qumran in the pseudo-Clementine literature. These documents 'actually much more

Jewish than Christian' - declare that 'the very purpose of the coming of Jesus the true prophet was...to put an end through baptism to the cult of sacrifices in Jerusalem.' The water of baptism was to put out the fire lit by the high priest. On the other hand the pseudo-Clementines regard Aaron as a principle of evil, in opposition to Moses, whereas Aaron was venerated by the men of Qumran. Here there is a link with Stephen's speech, for the golden calf was made by Aaron (Acts 7;14); it was $\chi\rho\omicron\pi\iota\acute{\eta}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ and so was the temple (7;48). 'It would be difficult to push this radicalism any further' says Cullmann, who speculates that it may be in tune with the thought of Jesus, who himself referred to a 'temple not made with hands'. (Mk. 14;58)

Lastly there is a link with the Samaritans; it is no accident that the mysterious $\Sigma\lambda\lambda\omicron\iota$ appear in the very chapter of the fourth gospel that deals with the woman of Samaria. 'The inhabitants of this country, which had strongly undergone the influence of paganism and syncretistic Hellenism, were half-Jews, who recognised the five books of Moses but rejected above all the temple of Jerusalem in favour of their own place of worship - the sacred mount Gerizim.....According to the church fathers, there was a Simonian religion in

Samaria, which appealed to the authority of Simon the magician. The role of Simon must have been more important than the Book of Acts indicates. According to the Pseudo-Clementines, he was the actual founder of a Gnostic sect, in which Hellenistic and Jewish elements were combined in a characteristic fashion which recalls certain aspects of the syncretistic Judaism which we are now studying...' Cullmann concludes: 'The Christians who were expelled from Jerusalem because of their rejection of the temple turned to preach the gospel among precisely those Jews of Samaria who had also long rejected (of course for other reasons) the cult of the temple of Jerusalem!'

Cullmann then proceeds to argue for a link between the Jewish 'spirituals' and the fourth gospel, as well as with the Epistle to the Hebrews. Stephen went further than the fourth evangelist, however. 'For him the construction of the temple represented an infidelity already within the

* Thus the thinkers behind these groups 'spiritualised' the temple much as seventeenth century radicals 'spiritualised' the sacraments. We may be sure that an underground stream links the thought of Boehme with that of George Fox, but it is feasible to plot its course?

history of Israel, while for the fourth gospel it is doubtless only after the coming of Christ that the cult of the temple was abolished. 'But we may conclude that 'The Johannine community was recruited especially from the circle of John the Baptist, and is clearly related too, if not identical with, the followers of Stephen called Hellenists'.

If the Hellenists were in fact a group of non-conformist Jews opposed to the temple, who existed already in the lifetime of Jesus, what then was his attitude to them? "Let us say that Jesus not only cleansed the temple, but he also uttered words about the temple which played an important role in his trial. In the form 'I shall destroy this temple and I will rebuild it' - it is a question of false testimony, according to the synoptists, which false witnesses, as Mark says, ascribed to him. But it is certain that Jesus said something else. On the one hand (Mk. 13;2) 'these shall not be left stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down', and on the other hand, (Mk. 14;58) 'I will build another temple made without hands' (= the community of disciples). In John 2 these two affirmations are combined together in the declaration that we read there in v 19: 'Destroy this temple, and I will rebuild it.'

Jesus himself,' says Cullmann, was 'above' both the synoptic and the Johannine types of Christianity. And it is curious that the accusation about the temple is precisely the one which Luke does not bring up at the trial of Jesus, but transfers - or at any rate makes use of - in the story of the death of Stephen: here it is (Acts 7:13) that the false witnesses declare that 'We have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and change the customs which Moses delivered to us.'

It is brilliant work, but will it stand up in court? A reasonable verdict must be 'There is probably something in it'. But how fragmentary and diverse is the evidence on which this edifice of theory is constructed! The history and dating of the pseudo-Clementines is as debateable as are the documents from the Dead Sea Caves! This uncertainty is characteristic of much ancient history and should not lead to exaggerated scepticism. We are not studying Neanderthal man, the graves of whose dead can tell us nothing precise about the intuitions of his religious pioneers. Cullmann's theory of a link between the Hellenists and sectarian Judaism^{is} more likely than a view which would ascribe the whole story to the literary creativity of Luke, but his circumstantial evidence must fall short of definite proof. And meanwhile other

scholars have taken a different road, and sought to link Stephen not with the caves and community of Qumran, but with the city and holy mountain of Samaria.

STEPHEN AND THE SAMARITANS

Noting the local tradition that Stephen was a Samaritan, Dr. Abram Spiro has tried to show that the arguments used in his speech depend on a use of the Samaritan Pentateuch.*

a) Stephen says that Abram left Haran after his father's death. This agrees with the Samaritan text which makes Terah, Abram's father, live for 145 years, while the Massoretic text allows him 205 years. Here, as elsewhere, the statistics of the Samaritan Pentateuch differ considerably from the M.T. Thus Kittel's Biblia Hebraica thinks that 145 years at Genesis 11; 32 is 'forte rectius' and compares Acts 7;4.

b) Stephen remarks that God promised Abraham the land but 'gave him no inheritance' (7;5 καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κληρονομίαν ἐν αὐτῇ, οὐδὲ βῆμα ποδός). This agrees with the Samaritan text of Deut 2;5b. The M.T. includes the word 'inheritance' at 11;5b only.

* Acts: Anchor Bible, p 285-300.

- c) God said to Moses: 'I am the God of your fathers. 'This version of Exodus 3;6 agrees with the Samaritan text which reads $\overline{\text{א}} \overline{\text{נ}} \overline{\text{א}} \overline{\text{נ}}$ as against the $\overline{\text{א}} \overline{\text{נ}}$ of the M.T. (once again B.H. thinks that the Samaritan version is right.)
- d) 'Stephen's history from Abraham through Moses depends on Genesis and Exodus. Hence 7;37, mentioning a future prophet like Moses, is based not on Deut 18;15, which would be an intrusion, but on the Samaritan book of Exodus which contains a pericope (after 20;17) composed of passages from Deut. and called by the Samaritans the tenth commandment.' (The passage in the Samaritan text resembles Deut 27;4-7: reference to the 'prophet like unto Moses' occurs in v21b of Von Gall's edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch.)
- e) 'The six times repeated demonstrative 'this' (Acts 7;35-40) is a Samaritan formulaary construction. A Samaritan liturgical poem has survived in which dozens of lines begin 'This is he' and end with 'This is Moses the son of Amram.' Stephen's identification of Palestine as 'this land in which you are now living', inapplicable in Jerusalem to the Sanhedrin, shows that Stephen composed this tract for use among newcomers, that is for the men of the Diaspora synagogues in Jerusalem.'

Neither of these points is strong. The

Sanhedrin could be contrasted (now living) with the Patriarchs - and even if Dr. Spiro is right, he has conceded at least that the tract was not composed for Stephen's trial. We also have difficulty in

finding the six-fold 'this'.
 1) τοῦτον τὸν Μωϋσῆν (v35)
 2) τοῦτον ὁ θεός (v35) (3) οὗτος ἔστιν ὁ Μωϋσῆς (v37)
 4) οὗτος ἔστιν ὁ γενόμενος... (v38) (5) ὁ γὰρ
 Μωϋσῆς οὗτος (v40)

Even if these expressions are thought to be parallel they are only five in number,

Apart from these linguistic points, Spiro attempts to show that the whole speech by Stephen 'glorified the Samaritans and denounced the Jews.' Twice, (Acts 7;2 and 7;4) he mentions Haran - a central point in Samaritan lore; the only other city he mentions is Shechem (7;16) the Samaritan counterpart of Jerusalem; and in the same verse he implies (?) that Abraham himself was buried in Shechem. He also used the term 'place' (τόπος = ܐܝܬܐ) at 7:7, and the use of Place=shrine is 'standard Samaritan usage'. The Holy Place is in fact Mount Gerizim (=Shechem). So too the puzzling misquotation from Amos 5;27, where exile 'beyond Damascus' is changed to 'beyond Babylon'. This is the work of a Samaritan hand, who substituted the exile of southern Judah to Babylon for that of the northerners 'beyond Damascus'.

Dr. Spiro also traces Samaritan ideas in the

last part of the speech, here his argument seems rather involved: David 'found favour in the sight of God and asked leave to find a habitation for the God of Jacob'. This depends on Psalm 132;4 where David swears not to rest 'until I find a place ('Maqom') for the Lord, a dwelling place for the mighty one of Jacob. 'Since it was in Samaritan opinion heretical to hold that Jerusalem was the 'place' 'Stephen followed Samaritan tradition by only using the second half of the verse and changing it; instead of the 'Mighty One' (i.e. God) of Jacob he has 'The house of Jacob.*

Br. Spiro further argues that the 'Hebrews' of 6;1 were not Aramaic - speaking Jews but Samaritans. 'The Samaritans called themselves Hebrews for centuries. By contrast the Jews of the first century C.E. did not call themselves Hebrews.

(Some writers when they wanted to archaise or use elevated style occasionally employed 'Hebrews' in literary compositions - but Hebrews as a synonym for Jews came into use only with the second century C.E., and then only in Christian writers).¹ Paul is therefore attacking Samaritan Christian mission-

* This is not quite right; 7;46 reads καὶ ἡγήσατο εἰπεῖν σκήνωμα τῷ θεῷ Ἰακώβ.

aries when he writes: 'Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I.' (2 Cor. 11;22)

The synagogue of the Hebrews at Corinth - which is attested by archaeological evidence - was according to Dr. Spiro, a Samaritan synagogue. 'Not only were 'Hebrews' Paul's enemies, but also the allies of the 'Hebrews', namely the 'Hellenists' who disputed with Paul and sought to kill him.

(Acts 9;29)

C.S. Mann thinks that Dr. Spiro's material has put beyond question the interpretation of 'Hebraioi' as 'Samaritans' or 'Samaritan Christians'. He therefore raises against the question of the identity of the Hellenists, and decides in favour of the meaning 'Hellenised Jews' - 'it is likely,' he declares - 'that the charge of being a 'Hellenist' is first century Judaism was equivalent to the charge of being a foreign agent.' 'The Hellenised Jews' and the 'Samaritan Christians' formed 'the two most significant minority groups in the Jerusalem church'. He concludes (p.30) that 'it is important that we do not exaggerate the dimensions of the quarrel between the Hellenist and Samaritan Christians in Jerusalem. United in their confession of Jesus as the Messiah, it was the very minority status which provoked the dispute which Luke reveals.'

Yet with due respect to Dr. Spiro's learning in the lore of the Samaritans, it must be questioned whether the identification of the Hebrews with the Samaritans is 'beyond all doubt'. The chief difficulty is that his view contradicts the plain statement of Acts itself. As so often, Luke is more lucid than his commentators.

Firstly, Acts 6;1 implies, not that Hebrews and Hellenists were two minority groups, but two sections into which the believers were divided. The twelve clearly belong to the Hebrew section, and can hardly be Samaritans, since Lk. 9;54 presents two of them as being in favour of calling fire down on a Samaritan village! Moreover, Luke is quite clear about the Samaritans in Acts. 8. He calls them by their usual name, and mentions their religious leader Simon, 'that power of God which is called great' (8;10). If Luke thought that the Hebrews of Acts 6;1 were Samaritans, why did he not say so? Finally the text of Acts clearly implies that Stephen was a Hellenist and not a Hebrew. Whatever was the truth about the 'widows' aid 'dispute, it clearly involved a complaint made by the Hellenist party. To appoint officials from the opposite group would make no sense at all.

The points made by Dr. Spiro are of very

unequal value, the strongest of them being that Stephen's speech agrees with the Samaritan version about Terah's age, and offers a reading corresponding to the Samaritan text of Exodus 3;6. The points, however, will hardly suffice to prove the mysterious martyr a Samaritan! The more fragmentary is the evidence, the more fruitful is the field for the growth of hypotheses! Yet the opposite view, that all the polemical touches are the work of Luke himself - is just as unsatisfactory. For if, as Haenchen argues, the anti-temple polemic represents the anti-Jewish feeling of the persecuted church in Luke's own time, the question remains: why insert it precisely at this point? Why foist it onto Stephen? Certainly it is strange that the two false witnesses who have disappeared from Luke's account of the passion of Jesus (Mk. 14:51) seem to have turned up in his version of the death of Stephen (Acts 7;13) he may well have wished to show the proto-martyr as a grand example, conformed in his death to the passion of his Lord. But this only makes sense if Stephen really was, in historical fact, a proto-martyr. The outline story of Acts is perfectly credible. Dr. Spiro is surely right to contrast the atmosphere of Acts 6 - 8 with that of 1 - 5. 'Our interest is in the mood which permeates the recollections of the early Christians.

They did not remember large-scale persecutions, continuous harassment, or a hostile population... Luke has not created texts in his Acts; he wrote like other Hellenistic writers who had texts at their disposal. When he found a text that was too unorthodox he left it out of his account. If the text could be salvaged by minor alterations, he edited and made use of it.'

Having said this, do we come any closer to the 'singular saint'? A detailed study of Stephen, by Martin H. Scharlemann,* covers ground very similar to that occupied by Dr. Spiro. There seems to be echoes of Samaritan thought in the speech. Yet Scharlemann agrees that Stephen was not himself a Samaritan - if he was 'It was inconceivable that Luke would not have mentioned it.' (p 19) Equally he was not a Hellenist. This is by no means implied by the story of the appointment of the Seven. 'An arrangement based on the appointment of fellow-Hellenists might well have created a serious imbalance, aggravating rather than rectifying the situation which the

* Stephen - a Singular Saint: by M.H. Scharlemann: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1968.

twelve moved to rectify.* There was in fact 'ethnic balancing' in the earliest church! Scharlemann's Stephen turns out to be lonely figure, deeply interested in Samaritan ideas, and anxious to heal the rift between Jew and Samaritan. He was not, however, a pioneer of the Gentile mission or a Paulinist before Paul.

Scharlemann agrees with Spiro, however, in finding 'major Samaritan echoes' in Stephen's speech. 'It is remarkable that Stephen quotes Deuteronomy 18;15 in connection with the giving of the law' - so remarkable that Haenchen (p 246) regards it as a gloss. It fits in, however, with the Samaritan 'tenth commandment'** which contains the words:

נביא אקים להם מקרב
אחיהם כמיך ונתתי דברי בפי

How old is this passage? It occurs in Greek form in Origen's Hexapla and, according to Moses Gaster, belongs to 'a very high antiquity'.

* Surely the account of the appointment of the Seven cannot be taken simply at its face value! Grounds for regarding Stephen as a Hellenist, together with the rest of the seven, are the Greek names they bear, and Stephen's appearance in dialogue with synagogue of the Diaspora Jews. (6;9)

** Text in Moses Gaster; The Samaritans, pl88-190.

Ancient tradition is also indicated by the 'belief in, or dogma of the Taheb so fully developed already before the beginning of the Christian era (c.f. John 4;25)' *

Scharlemann concludes: 'There can be little doubt....that Stephen is here echoing a Samaritan context dealing with the revelation on Mount Sinai. We must also add here the notice that certain fragments of a Samaritan recension were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. They contain the same kind of transpositions as we have already noted including the expansion at Exodus 20:21! '**

Scharlemann, following the same line of argument as Dr. Spiro, notes 15 points of affinity between Stephen and the Samaritans. Notably he regards the reference to 'a prophet like unto Moses' as 'explained best in the light of the fact that the Samaritans thought of the coming Messiah as a great teacher...The likelihood of this Samaritan

* Gaster p. 187.

** See P.W. Skehan in JBL, LXXIV, 1955 p. 182. It does not appear, however, from this article, that the actual expanded text of Exodus 20;18FF has been found at Qumran. The antiquity of the recension as a whole, however, is certainly demonstrated.

association is increased by Stephen's obvious interest in the days of the tabernacle and Joshua'.

The true source of Stephen's ideas, according to Scharlemann, may well have been Jesus himself. 'Stephen came to the conclusion that Jesus was the Taheb, the prophet like Moses, and gave special thought to the temple sayings of Jesus as they applied to the responsibilities of the early Christian community towards the Samaritans, in whom their Lord had shown special interest.' He was not a Hellenist. 'It is extremely doubtful that Stephen had any kind of direct following.' (Scharlemann p. 54). His originality lay in his Old Testament interpretation: he was 'a theological genius who had grasped the divisive effect of the temple in Jerusalem, and who had background, opportunity to provide a unique understanding of the Old Testament as it related to the coming of God's Righteous One' (p 56)

To analyse the original theology of Stephen, Scharlemann has, of course, only the speech in Acts to go on; 'the discourse ascribed to Stephen is an authentic statement of his theology as he articulated it in his synagogue discussions (Acts 6;8) and as he spoke in defence of his position when he was accused before the Sanhedrin of undermining the traditional beliefs and practises of the

Jewish people.'

Scharlemann analyses Stephen's speech and in particular his treatment of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and the tabernacle. This is contrasted with the presentation of these figures in contemporary or near-contemporary Jewish writers like Philo and Josephus. Consider 'our father Abraham' for example. Philo allegorises him:* he is the 'wise man made perfect by instruction.' The blessing promised by God was 'the acquisition of that wisdom which is not taught by the outward ~~sense~~ sense but it comprehended by the pure mind.' Josephus on the other hand 'had a greater appreciation of history than that demonstrated by Philo.' But he embellishes his history with legendary anecdotes; Abraham taught the Egyptians arithmetic and astronomy.** He opposed the astrology of the Chaldeans. The Book of Jubilees goes further and sees in Abraham the founder of the Feast of Tabernacles (16;20-31). Rabbinic piety was ready to supply more details; 'Abraham saw himself seated at the left hand of God, while the Messiah occupied the place of greater prominence, on his

* Philo: 'On who is the heir of divine things' Loeb Ed.XX p96, cited by Scharlemann p 60.

** Ant. 1; vll; 1 and 1; vlll; 2

right. When he demurred at this arrangement, God reminded Abraham that after all, He Himself, God, was sitting at the right hand of the patriarchs. At another time Abraham was shown four things: Gehenna, the kingdoms that would tyrannise over his descendants, the giving of the law and the sanctuary on Mount Moriah!*

Scharlemann argues - as he does for Joseph and Moses - 'There can be little doubt that materials such as these were extant in the days of Stephen. It is of paramount importance to notice that he used none of them'...'In Stephen's discourse Abraham is discussed according to the emphases and interests of the Old Testament, whose accounts of and references to the Father of Israel were written to exalt God rather than to glorify Abraham.'

Scharlemann's Stephen turns out to be a Biblical theologian, a kind of first century Von Rad this time, who 'felt that the significance of the Old Testament was to be found in the thrust of its central theme: God's dealings with his people in terms of promise and judgement.' Not for him was the tortuous and unhistorical exegesis of Qumran. The latter took the apocalyptic view of revelation: one man received a mystery (57)

* Scharlemann p. 62.

from God, and another the ability to give the interpretation (pesher). For Qumran the great interpreter of doctrine was the Teacher of Righteousness himself. Thus says the commentary of Habakkuk 2;1: 'As to the phrase' that he who runs may read, 'this refers to the teacher who expounds the law aright, for God has made him au courant with all the deeper implications of the words of his servants the prophets.'*

But in fact the Commentary on Habakkuk was simply wrong. The Old Testament text was not intended to refer to the Teacher of Righteousness at all. 'Such interpretative procedures...deprive the Old Testament documents of their historical significance. The original context remains a matter of indifference. For the mystery was given in code language, so to speak, and only the Teacher of Righteousness was given the key to the riddle...the original setting was ignored, on the principle that whatever Moses and the prophets had been told was meant to be fully understood only at

* Scharlemann (p 84) quotes Gaster: The Dead Sea Scrolls: p. 251.

the end of time.' *

Stephen's thought, however, was free from this kind of 'type-hunting' exegesis. He saw the Old Testament story in its historical context, but also understood 'the inner connections' given within the Old Testament account of God's dealing with his people. 'Where then did he learn to understand the Old Testament in such a uniquely dynamic way, if not under the influence of the teaching of Jesus, 'with which..he may have first come in contact in his home territory of Ephraim?'

Thus Stephen emerges from Scharlemann's analysis as a "singular saint" indeed, a much misunderstood martyr who had few followers, and cannot easily be classified as a Hellenist, a Samaritan, or a forerunner of Paul. He was 'a towering theological genius endowed with prophetic insights that turned out to be too revolutionary for general acceptance.....Therefore Luke's inclusion of the figure^{and} of the discourse of Stephen bears eloquent testimony to the evangelists' sense o

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* In the same way Justin Martyr argued with Trypho the Jew about proofs texts, and the latter was nearer the mark than Justin in claiming that Isaiah 7;14 'was spoken of Hezekiah'. (Dial;77)

of history as it relates to the primitive church.'*

Here is yet another fascinating reconstruction, but again one doubts if the foundation of ascertainable fact is strong enough to support the edifice of theory. Firstly we must assume that the speech in Acts 7 gives us reliable evidence for the views of Stephen. If this not impossible point is granted, we must then try to prove a negative - that Stephen's methods of Biblical interpretation were not like those of Philo, Josephus, the writers of apocalyptic, and the covenanters of Qumran. Any such proof must of necessity fall short of demonstration: the speech may well give us the historical Stephen - but does it give us the whole Stephen and nothing but Stephen?

Dr. Scharlemann's theory meets with one serious difficulty. In Acts 7:22 we are told that 'Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.' Is not this precisely one of those fictional embellishments to be found in Josephus and in 'edifying' Jewish literature generally? What then becomes of Stephen, the sternly historical exegete? Scharlemann is obliged to concede that 'At times Stephen goes somewhat beyond the Old Testament account of Moses. He uses such

* Scharlemann p. 188.

extra-Biblical items as the reference to the wisdom of Moses, the notice that he was forty years old at the time of his flight into Midian, and that he stayed there forty years. Stephen's assertion that Moses was strong not only in deeds but in words seems to run counter to the statement in Exodus 4;10. According to Stephen the law was given by angels; this kind of mediation is not mentioned at all in the New Testament!* Both Philo and Josephus, however, ascribe to angels the task of transmitting to Moses the tablets of the law; so do the pseudepigraphical works known as the Book of Jubilees and the Testaments of the Patriarchs.....

....Despite some minor embellishments, therefore, Stephen's account of Moses is deeply rooted in the Old Testament...' **

The author's 'therefore' is surely out of place! If the 'minor embellishments' he mentions prove anything, they surely show, not that he had a unique line in Biblical interpretation, but he shared the 'romantic novel' interests of Josephus, Jubilees, and Rabbinic Judaism as well!

Lacking any first hand document by Stephen,

* It is expressly condemned in Gal. 3;19!

** Scharlemann p. 75.

or any information about him outside Acts 6-8, we would be unwise to draw too detailed conclusions about the martyr's thoughts and theology. What would we think of Paul if we had the Acts story and speeches only? But two points do emerge with reasonable clarity, however: Stephen's speech displays hostility to the temple, and its Biblical quotations are related to the Samaritan Pentateuch. It would be entirely contrary to Luke's method to invent the figure of Stephen, and it is unsatisfactory to suppose that the polemic against the temple reflects only the controversies of Luke's day. Thus Stephen may well have been a dissenting thinker who had links with unorthodox Judaism and the Samaritan faith: such a view, after all, makes sense of his untimely end. Surely, too he was a 'Hellenist', as the text of Acts 6;1-6 implies. He was the first of the seven Deacons, who were appointed precisely to meet charges of discrimination against the Hellenistic community.

One further theory remains to be considered: While Cullmann sought to link the Hellenists with Qumran, and Spiro tried to prove a connection between Stephen and the Samaritans, Prof. Matthew Black has attempted to find a link between the Dead Sea Community and the 'Hebrews'. Taking as his starting point the theory that Christianity

was rooted in 'non-conformist' Judaism, Prof. Black declares that 'Cullmann's theory would have been more convincing if the link with Qumran had been through the party of the 'Hebrews' or the 'Hebraists' rather than with the Hellenists. 'For the context shows that the Seven were 'a group of Greek-speaking Jews from the Diaspora, probably only temporarily at Jerusalem, who had accepted the Christian faith.....' Cullmann has given us no valid reason to doubt the view of H.J. Cadbury: 'It is natural to suppose that the Seven were 'Hellenists' and that Stephen's opponents were of the same class.' But what positive evidence is there to connect the term 'Hebrews' of Acts 6;1 with Qumran? Prof. Black argues that 'the term *Ἑβραῖος* was an archaic form of speech. Josephus employs it when speaking of the Hebrews of the patriarchal age. 'It later came to mean' Jewish Christians' and the way was prepared....for its special Christian use by the revival of the expression as a term for certain members of the Hebrew race in the last two centuries B.C. It came increasingly to describe loyal Jews, especially in the Maccabaeian period, who displayed the traditional virtues of their patriarchal forefathers.' (e.g. 2 Macc 7;31,11;13,15;37) It also occurs in the Sibylline Oracles as a term meaning the

'faithful elect' (e.g. Sib 3;69, where we are told that Beliar shall lead astray both πιστους τ' ἐκλεκτους θ' ἑβραίους and ἀνόμους τε καὶ ἄλλους ἀνέρας

In view of such as usage, it is possible that the description of synagogues of the 'Hebrews' in the diaspora means more than synagogues of Aramaic-speaking Jews, and that the reference is rather to Jews of the Hasidaean tradition - that is of the Essene type....we would have an even closer link between the 'Hebrews' of Acts and the non-conformist tradition of the scrolls.*

There seems little solid evidence to support this conjecture. There is nothing unusual in the association of positive virtues like loyalty and courage with one's own nationality, and the opposite characteristics with the other fellow's: thus we have un-American activities, Dutch courage, British justice, African hospitality and French leave. The Franks are renowned for their frankness, and the Vandals notorious for their vandalism. Dr. Black's references certainly show that 'Hebrew' could mean 'staunch, loyal, faithful Hebrew par excellence' in the books of Maccabees and the Sibylline oracles. But we know too little

* M. Black: The Scrolls and Christian origins:
p. 71-79.

about the every day language of first century Judaism to assert that the term 'Hebraios' could never mean 'Jew' or 'Aramaic-speaking Jew.'; the inscription found at Corinth, referring to a 'synagogue of the Hebrews' is a clear indication of this.* Moreover, it is a bold leap indeed from the pious resisters of the Maccabaeon period to the community of Qumran, and from Qumran to the earliest church community in Jerusalem.

Who then were the Hellenists after all? As with much ancient history, certainty in matters of detail can hardly be attained, and yet converging lines of evidence allow us reasonable confidence as to the broad outline. In Luke's account of the Hellenist affair we seem to read a record composed by an honest recorder whose evidence was partly written and partly based on folk tradition. The linguistic explanation still seems the most likely - that the Hebrews habitually spoke Aramaic and the Hellenists spoke Greek. That there was tension between the two sections of the community is highly probable, as is the story of the disagreement about the care of widows, which may well have been the 'last straw' rather than only

* The New Bible Dictionary: Ed. J.D. Douglas
p. 191.

cause of the dispute. Stephen and the Seven were certainly historical figures.

For the speech Luke used a written source, and the simplest conclusion is that it really reflects, however imperfectly, the ideas of the historical Stephen. Close analysis of the speech reveals links with the Samaritan scriptures and hostility to the temple in Jerusalem. It therefore follows that the martyr's stormy career and untimely death were connected with his revolutionary and unacceptable theology, which outraged the piety of the Jewish faithful.

But while it is probable enough that Stephen's thought had been linked, even in pre-Christian days, with dissenting Judaism, we are unable to connect him definitely with either the Samaritans or with the Dead Sea Community. Nor does it follow that his controversial views were shared by his fellow-Hellenists Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmen~~as~~ and Nicholas the proselyte of Antioch. But if the Hellenists were Greek-speaking Jews of the dispersion, who maintained semi-permanent communities in the Holy City, then it is quite credible that 'left-wing' theological views should have developed. We know too little about the ferment of thought in the first century- or rather, our not inconsiderable information is too

fragmentary-to link Stephen with either Mount Gerizim or the Dead Sea. But if the mosaic is fragmentary, the Stephen episode, we may be sure, is nevertheless a genuine section of the original picture. Likewise we cannot be definite as to whether Stephen's opposition to the temple derived from his understanding - or misunderstanding - of Jesus of Nazareth. Like many a pious writer, Luke has made the martyr 'conformable in his death' to that of his master. But he has not falsified the event; the one was crucified and the other stoned. Was Saul of Tarsus present? For this detail we depend on Luke only, but it corresponds quite well to Paul's own statement that he had 'persecuted the church violently' (Gal 1;13). We see no adequate reason to doubt the plain statement that 'Saul was consenting to his death.'

Quite credible, too, is Luke's statement that the destruction of Stephen set off a great persecution and heresy hunt. His dating of this event ('on that day' - 8;1) is precise and indicates a causal as well as a chronological connection. It is hard to take his statement at face value, however, when he says that all were scattered 'except the apostles'. That an underground church in Jerusalem 'lay low' till the storm blew over is likely enough, but that all fled except the twelve

could hardly make sense. Prof. Moule's explanation - that the twelve were not attacked because they were Galileans and therefore unrecognised - seems unlikely. After all the twelve were not the only Galilean followers of Jesus, and Peter had found once before that his Galilean connection tended to incriminate him.* Rather is it likely that Luke is here influenced by his presuppositions about the twelve; they stayed in Jerusalem, because that is where they, the 'apostles' ought to be. If odium theologicum lay behind the dispute within the church about widows' benefit, then it may well have influenced a 'selective persecution' of Hellenist believers too. But of this we cannot be certain.

On this view Stephen and the Hellenist group played a decisive part in the spread of the faith. Luke has faithfully told their story, but in broad outline and in saga style. His story, even when unsupported by other corroborative evidence, can be used to give information about Stephen and his ideas, even though we have no epistles of Stephen to help us. With Paul other evidence does exist, and it has been argued they provide contradiction

* Ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶ· καὶ γὰρ Γαλιλαῖος ἐστίν

instead of corroroboration. Is the Paul of the letters quite incompatible with the Paul of Acts? If so, we can hardly place much confidence in what Luke tells us about Stephen!

CHAPTER 6

SAUL ALIAS PAUL: WHAT EVIDENCE IS ADMISSIBLE?

St. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, remains a controversial figure. While his teaching has been regarded with veneration by generations of theologians, and served as an inspiration to Augustine, Luther, and Wesley, he is also frequently under fire as the one who perverted the pure and simple faith of the man from Nazareth into something deplorable: thus Bernard Shaw: 'It was Paul who converted the religion that had raised one man above sin and death into a religion that delivered millions of men into their dominion, so that their own common nature became a denial to them, and the religious life became a denial of life.'* Thus also Prof. G.M. Carstairs, 'For (Christ) the cardinal virtue was charity; that is, consideration of and concern for people. It was his intemperate disciple, Paul, an authoritarian character, who introduces the concept of celibacy

* Preface to Androcles and the Lion;

p lXXVI.

as an essential part of Christian teaching." *
It is not difficult to multiply examples of this kind of thinking, which C.S. Lewis once described as an oblique attack on the king's minister which is really directed at the king himself. Meanwhile on the other side of the fence, Paul's admirers and defenders continue to try to interpret his meaning to the modern world.**

Yet before Paul can be properly judged we must decide what can be brought in evidence. Saul alias Paul ($\Sigma\alpha\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ & $\Pi\alpha\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ Acts 13:9) must be identified before he can be brought before any tribunal of enquiry. Any verdict on Paul, favourable, or unfavourable, can only be based on a close study of the evidence available to us about the Jew from Tarsus.

Assuming, of course, that he was a Jew and

* This island now: p.50 Prof. Carstairs does indeed put things right in a note (p57) that "it was after ^{all} Paul who wrote, in his first epistle to the Corinthians: 'And now abideth faith hope and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.'" Yet the view of Paul presented in his original lecture is clearly widely held.

** C.H. Dodd: The meaning of Paul for today:

W. Barclay: The Mind of St. Paul.

that he in fact came from Tarsus. This takes us to the heart of our problem. Professor John Knox, for example, is convinced that he was indeed a Jew and 'reasonably certain' that he came from Tarsus in Cilicia.* 'Although then we can be fully sure only that Paul was a Hellenistic Jew, for this is all that the letters tell us, we can be reasonably certain also that he was Saul of Tarsus in Cilicia.'

There are two main sources of evidence about Paul: the letters attributed to him in the New Testament, and the Acts of the Apostles. In addition there are later traditions of the church, such as are found in 1 Clement, and the pious apocryphal writings, such as that interesting predecessor of the novel 'Quo Vadis' - 'The Acts of Paul and Thekla.'

Nevertheless it is clear that our main sources are still the epistles and the canonical book of Acts. These seem to coincide at many points, and it has always been disputed whether both are reliable, or whether Acts should be preferred to the letters, or more usually, vice versa.

A good example of coincidence is that 'basket incident': Acts tells us

* Chapters in a life of Paul; p.34.

'When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night to kill him, but the disciples took him by night and let him down over the wall, lowering him in a basket.' Acts 9;23-25.

Paul would seem to refer to the same incident when he says - solemnly calling God to witness - 'At Damascus the governor (ethnarch) under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.' 2 Cor. 11-33.

Commentators deal with this incident according to their presuppositions: There is much speculation about the power of the ethnarch of King Aretas: and while some praise Luke for his accuracy, others criticise him for his scanty knowledge. It is possible to suppose that the Jews (Acts 9;23) were in league with the Arabian chief (whoever he was). But Haenchen (p282) has another explanation. Luke knew nothing of Paul's stay in Arabia and so could make no sense of the ethnarch. 'It is not surprising that the eternal enemies of Paul, 'the Jews', have taken the place of that baffling personality as persecutors.' The letters (Galatians and Corinthians) are right and Acts is wrong.

The classic statement of a 'harmonising' view of Acts and the epistles was given thus by Paley in his 'Horae Paulinae':

- '1 The volume of Christian scriptures contains
- A. Thirteen letters purporting to be written by St. Paul.
 - B. A ~~book~~ professing to give the history of St. Paul

By assuming the genuineness of (A) we may prove the substantial truth of (B). By assuming the truth of (B) we may argue strongly for the genuineness of (A). But neither assumption is here made: suppose these writings lately discovered, and destitute of any extrinsic or collateral evidence; still the argument about to be offered is calculated to show that a comparison of the different writings would afford good reason to believe the persons and the transactions real, the letters authentic, and the narrative in the main true.'*

Paley is well aware that mere coincidence between the Acts and the epistles proves nothing in itself, since either source could be dependent on the other. 'The argument to be offered' - and it is by no means unimpressive - turns out to have as its mainspring the following: 'In examining the

* An analysis of Paley's Horae Paulinae, ed.
J. Gorle: Cambridge 1867.

agreement between ancient writings, the character of truth and originality is UNDESIGNEDNESS:

obvious and explicit agreements are useless for our arguments: though they may, and probably will, occur in genuine writings, yet it cannot be proved that they are peculiar to these.....*

The proper purpose of the following work is to bring together from the Acts and from the different epistles examples of undesigned coincidence!**

Paley then proceeds to work through the Pauline epistles and to note the 'undesigned coincidences' which appear between them and the Book of Acts: a few examples may illustrate his method:

a) "Romans 15;25-26: 'But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints: for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.'

Three distinct circumstances are here noted:

- 1) i A contribution in Macedonia
ii for the poor saints in Jerusalem.
- 2) i a contribution in Achaia
ii for the same purpose
- 3) An intended journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem."

* Paley: 8:4

** Paley: p.8.

Paley is then able to find (3) at Acts 20;3. I (ii) he is able to discover at 24;17-19, where Paul tells Felix, 'I came to my people bringing alms and offerings.' Other parallels are found in the Corinthian letters, and Paley concludes: 'This is an instance of conformity a) beyond the power of random writing to produce, and (b) in the highest degree improbable to have been the effect of designcoincidences so circuitious answer not the ends of forgery.' *

b) Yet Paley is after all on fairly easy ground here: let us follow him into that locus classicus of New Testament studies - a comparison between Acts and Galatians, 1 and 2. His thesis is that the Epistles and Acts were written 'without communication with each other', and that the epistle is 'independent of the history in Acts, yet corroborative of it.'

Paley then places side by side the accounts of Paul's conversion as found in Acts 9:19-24 and in Galatians 1 and 2.

Besides the general difference between these two versions 'the journey into Arabia mentioned in b) (Galatians) and omitted in A (Acts), fully proves that there was no correspondence between

* p. 79-81.

these writers.' Furthermore, Paul's journey to Jerusalem 'after 14 years' is either the same as the council visit in Acts 15, or is unnoticed in Acts. "St. Peter's visit to Antioch during which St. Paul rebuked him (Gal. ch. ii) is not mentioned in the Acts."

Paley seems to have proved that Acts and Galatians are independent of each other. He goes on to point out that the 'epistle, by recital, implication, and reference, bears testimony to a great variety of particulars contained in the history'. These as listed by Paley, include

- '1. St. Paul's early proficiency in, and zeal for, Judaism.
2. His persecution of the Christian church before his conversion.
3. His conversion.
4. Course of St. Paul's travels after his conversion.
5. Barnabas was with St. Paul at Antioch.
6. The stated residence of the apostles was at Jerusalem.
7. There were at Jerusalem two apostles, or at least two eminent members of the church, of the name of James.'

These 'undesigned coincidences' go a long way to show that the epistles and Acts are independent

witnesses to events which really happened. Yet Paley is more concerned to establish the veracity of Galatians than that of Acts, and he does not discuss the reason why two crucial visits - of Paul to Jerusalem and of Peter to Antioch - are, on his view, omitted from the account in Acts. Notwithstanding all the valuable 'undesigned coincidences,' it seems that a 'credibility gap' remains.

c) Lastly let us observe Paley at work on an epistle which many more recent critics have regarded as non-Pauline; the first letter to Timothy. He quotes 1 Tim. 1;15 - 'This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief' - and declares:* 'The whole quotation plainly, by reference to St. Paul's original enmity to the Christian name, affirms the substance of the apostle's history in the Acts,... It may be said perhaps that an imposter may have put such a sentiment into a letter drawn up in St. Paul's name, but where is such an imposter to be found? The piety, the truth, the benevolence of the thought ought to protect it from this imputation, for though we should allow that a

* p. 170-171.

great master of ancient tragedy could have given to his scene a sentiment so elevated, and as appropriate to the person delivering it, yet those conversant with these enquiries will acknowledge that to do this is beyond the ability of any author of fabrications which have come down to us under Christian names.'

Here Paley is on weaker ground. He really has no 'undesigned coincidence' to point out, as the statement in 1 Tim could be dependent on Acts. He is therefore obliged to appeal to more subjective literary criteria. Nobody but Paul could have expressed himself so nobly: no forger could have passed off such material as genuine! Paley is also unfamiliar with the distinction made by a more sophisticated age: that there was nothing morally offensive about pseudepigraphy in the first century A.D. *

Paley's logic is acute and his literary style is readable; he can still offer a good antidote to extreme scepticism about the factual value of the New Testament documents. Indeed his 'Horae

* The rights and wrongs of pseudepigraphy we do not consider here, but note only that 'honest pseudepigraphy' is not a possibility considered by Paley.

'Paulinae' has stood the test of time better than his Natural Theology with its famous argument than an accidentally discovered watch implies a watchmaker.

At the opposite pole to Paley stands Professor John Knox. His work is perhaps typical of those who regard Acts as an unreliable source of information, and attempt to reconstruct the life of Paul chiefly, if not entirely, from the letters alone.

Knox declares that* 'of our two sources the letters are obviously and incomparably the more trustworthy. 'They are primary documents written by Paul himself, while Acts is a secondary source. The author did his best, but 'to make something coherent and unified out of his sources 'required the use of a good deal of imagination.' 'Knox continues: 'The truth in principle...no serious student of Paul's life is likely to deny, but its meaning in practise is not so widely or so clearly seen.'

One might put this in another way by saying that Paul's letters are the raw material of history: in that sense they are certainly primary documents. Luke's book is, however, an attempt

* Chapters in a life of Paul: Chs. 1 and 2.

at writing history itself, however unsuccessful. 'Imaginative reconstruction' is, as Professor Knox remarks, 'involved in any historical writing' - from Luke to Loisy and including Professor Knox himself.

We may also agree with Professor Knox when he claims that Paul's letter must remain our primary source of information about Paul's inward life. They are his own testimony, like Cromwell's letters, or the meditations of Marcus Aurelius, or Patrick's letter to the soldiers of Coroticus. Such personal documents allow us to glimpse the inwardness of an Oliver, a Marcus, or a Patrick. The latter was certainly a man of like passions with Paul:

'with mine own hand I have written and composed these words to be given and delivered to the soldiers of Coroticus; I do not say to my fellow-citizens or to fellow-citizens of the holy Romans, but to those who are fellow-citizens of demons because of their evil deeds. Behaving like enemies, they are dead while they live, allies of the Scots and of the apostate Picts, as though wishing to gorge themselves with blood, the blood of innocent Christians, whom I in countless numbers begot to God and confirmed in

Christ.' *

Yet surely a man's own words are not the whole truth about him. We do not go to the letters and speeches alone to find out about Cromwell. Something can be discovered from the portrait painted by Clarendon in his History of the Great Rebellion, as well as in the verses written about the Protector by his poet-secretaries, Milton and Marvell. To learn about Marcus Aurelius we can turn to his triumphal column, with its grim record of his German wars, as well as to the meditations. To reject a priori all testimony by third parties would surely be wrong.

Such is indeed by no means the method proposed by Professor Knox. He distinguishes between the 'internal' and 'external' spheres of Paul's life. It would be quite wrong, for example, to quote the speech before Agrippa in the same breath with something from the letter to the Romans 'as evidence for Paul's spiritual life and personal thinking. 'This must certainly be conceded.

* The writings of St. Patrick: trans N.J. White
SPCK, 1961 (p.28) Coroticus was a nominally
Christian British King who went slave-raiding on
the Irish coast. The quest for the historical
Patrick was undertaken by J.B. Bury, who certainly

* Footnote continued from p.316.

had no ecclesiastical axe to grind. He wrote (Life of St.Patrick, p.vii) that his conclusions 'tended to show that the Roman Catholic conception of St. Patrick's work is, generally, nearer to historical fact than the views of some anti-papal divines! The whole Patrick story is of much interest to the student of New Testament origins, as has been pointed out by S.C.Neill (New Testament Interpretation, 1861 - 1961, p 284 - 85) Bury's remarks of the Life by Muirchu is worth noting: 'Muirchu's life had a marked influence on all subsequent Patrician biographies. It established a framework of narrative which later compilers adopted, fitting in material from other sources.' Clearly Acts played a similar part in the telling of the history of Paul.

We follow the Paley method and note one 'undesigned coincidence' in the not very factual hymn of St. Sechnall:

' From twofold slavery he doth set captives free
Very many hath he redeemed from slavery to men
Countless numbers he released from the devil's
thrall.'
(Newport White; p.41.)

Here, as in the letter to Coroticus, release from slavery and conversion to the Christian faith are closely connected.

We may leave on one side the complicated question of the 'internal' and 'external' Paul. The former is obviously of more interest to Professor Knox: 'the real source for Paul, that is for Paul's personality and thought, is Paul.' What then of the apostle's 'external' career - his upbringing - his Jewish name, his missionary travels and his friends and companions? Is not the narrative of Acts primary here? Knox writes that 'while we tend to harmonise Acts with the letters as regards the inner facts of Paul's life, we tend to harmonise the letters with Acts as regards the outer.' This method, says Knox, is fundamentally wrong. "The letters remains our only first hand source for the outer facts too, even though they happen not to say as much about them as Acts does, and so important is the distinction in this case that we can justly say that a fact only suggested in the letters has a status which even the most unequivocal statement of Acts, if not otherwise supported, cannot confer. We may, with proper caution, use Acts to supplement the autobiographical data of the letters, but never to correct them." Such is the grand interpretative principle of Professor Knox.*

* p. 33.

This principle it is necessary to contest: the question of the relative value of Acts and the epistles is more complicated than is here suggested.

Firstly one must decide which letters are in fact by Paul: Knox reckons with, 'Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon..... of these 2 Thessalonians and Colossians are the most questionable.' * Now this view, valid as it may be, depends on a previous critical analysis, F.C. Baur in the 19th century, and A.Q. Morton's computer in the twentieth, are still more radical, and leave us with only four letters to go on. Meanwhile other critics continue to claim authenticity for Ephesians and even the Pastorals, and one of the most moving and interesting of all the 'autobiographical' fragments in Paul's letters occurs in 2 Tim 4;9-22. Here we learn of the desertion of Demas and of the presence of the still faithful Luke: the passage is one of those accepted as genuine by P.N. Harrison on the basis of his 'fragment theory'. **

Secondly when the corpus of Paul's letters has

* p. 20

** P.N. Harrison: The problem of the pastoral epistles; p. 115-136.

been decided the question of their interpretation remains. Knox's axiom that the data of Acts should never be allowed to contradict those of the epistles is in logic fallacious for the following reasons:

- 1) Paul could be mistaken as to facts. He might have left his cloak at Miletus and not at Troas. Crescens might have gone to Dalmatia and Titus to Galatia. Such slips of the pen or the memory are very simply made.
- 2) Paul could be lying: unless we assume the entire sanctification of the apostle on a priori grounds, we cannot simply assert that he could never tell an untruth.
- 3) Paul might, through emotional bias or personal prejudice, give an unclear account of his doings or one that was less than impartial. We have no doubt that the apostle would oppose his characteristic, 'God forbid' (*μή γένοιτο*) to any thought of 'suggestio falsi', but he might still fall into the trap of 'suppressio veri'. All of which is of paramount importance in the study of highly controversial documents like Galatians and the

latter part of 2 Corinthians, for example. *

4) Our estimate of the value of Acts will also depend on our general view of its construction and authorship. If written by a contemporary and companion of Paul, its value will be considerably higher as a source for 'external' events than if it were a second or third-hand account. To say this is not to make a fetish out of 'eye-witness' testimony, which is indeed subject to frequent human error.

5) Again, if the author of Acts, while not a companion of Paul, used a document which did come from Paul's immediate circle, we have here another source of value for 'external' events. Hence the search for a 'we-source', 'travel-diary' or 'itinerary' in all its various forms.

6) Finally, when we are forced to 'compare and contrast' the data of Acts with those of the letters, we must maintain a judicious balance in comparing

* Consider the famous conundrum: was Titus circumcised? The apostle's ambiguity of grammar on this point (οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἑλλήν ὢν, ἠναγκάσθη περιτμηθῆναι. Gal. 2:4)

betrays his profound embarrassment. On this see

Munck: Paul and the Salvation of mankind.

p. 95-98.

and contrasting. So fragmentary are the documents, and so vast the silence of the past from which all critics and historians will be obliged at times to argue, that we must beware of jumping to conclusions based on silence or conjecture.

Knox carefully studies the testimony of Acts as to Paul's life: he notes firstly the claim that Paul was a Jew named Saul. This is likely enough, as Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, to which the Old Testament Saul belonged (Phil 3;5). Luke had no motive to invent such a name and so 'we are justified in accepting this item from Acts as supplementing the Pauline letter data.' *

So too with Paul's alleged birth at Tarsus in Cilicia. Luke had no grounds to invent this: he would have preferred to have his hero born in Jerusalem. It fits in too with Paul's claim that Cilicia was one of his early mission fields.

(Gal. 1;2) 'Although, then, we can be fully sure only that Paul was a Hellenistic Jew, for this is all that the letters tell us, we can, be reasonably certain that he was Saul from Tarsus in Cilicia.'

What of Paul's education in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel? This is doubted by Knox for

* Knox p. 34.

two reasons; firstly Paul frequently refers to his authentic training in orthodox Judaism. 'Why then does he say nothing of his education in Jerusalem at the feet of this distinguished Rabbi?' What is more: if Paul was in fact a pupil of Gamaliel, that fact wonderfully suited the purposes of Luke. 'It suited him to have his hero trained in Jerusalem, when one of his main concerns was to show Christianity as the authentic fulfilment of the Jewish hope.' Paul could quite well have studied Rabbinics elsewhere. 'This is one of a class of items which we are not justified in denying, but of which we must be gravely doubtful.'

One may also have doubts about the doubts of Professor Knox. The argument from the letters is from silence. There seems no valid reason why Paul ought to have mentioned Gamaliel in his letters. He claims to have been advanced in Judaism at Gal. 1;14, to be a Hebrew of the Hebrews at Phil 3;5, as well as *κατὰ νόμον φαρισαῖος*: all of which fits in satisfactorily with a period of study under Gamaliel. The second point - that the story of Paul's studies in Jerusalem fits in well with Luke's apologetic purpose - raises a crucial question: Did Luke select material which suited his preconceived ideas, or did he invent it? Or did he 'write up' incidents which he

regarded as crucial to his story: the Cornelius incident, for example, or the Council of Jerusalem? It is possible, even probable, that he 'wrote up' events which really happened because he saw that they played a symbolic part in the story he wanted to tell: but as to Luke's 'fertile imagination' we agree with Trocmé: 'Luke has not completely invented any of the stories in his book'.*

Knox reinforces his doubts, however, by reference to two more alleged episodes in Paul's career; his persecution of the church in Judaea and his conversion on the road to Damascus. 'Here we are forced to recognise a real conflict between the Acts story and the clear meaning of Paul's own words, and therefore must reject the Acts story out of hand'. Paul, had certainly persecuted the church but not in Judaea; they only heard it said, 'He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy'. (Gal. 1;22)

Moreover, 'the whole passage' (Gal 1;11-24) 'not only suggests but demands the view that Paul was living, not in Jerusalem, but elsewhere - probably at Damascus - immediately before, at the time of, and for at least three years after his conversion. Paul says, 'I returned to Damascus

* Trocmé: p. 199.

(v.17) as one might say 'I returned home'. Then he continues, 'After three ~~years~~ I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days: (v.18) a statement hardly applicable to the city where he lived.'

If Knox is right about this and Acts wrong, why then did Luke come to make such a mistake? 'The detail on which the two accounts agree is that the experience of Paul which changed the persecutor into the believer took place near Damascus.' Luke learned this from his sources, but the idea that Paul had lived in Jerusalem is an enterprising conjecture of his own. 'The author's problem here was quite similar to the problem he faced at the beginning: that of Jesus' birth. There he had to account for the fact that Jesus, who he knew must have been born in Bethlehem of Judaea, was represented by his sources, or at least some of them, as being from Nazareth; here he must explain why Paul, who he knew must have had his residence and headquarters at Jerusalem, was known from his sources to have begun his Christian career in Damascus. In each case he makes what seems to him to be a reasonable surmise - a census in Luke and letters of extradition in Acts.' *

* Knox p.38.

Thus argues Knox, following Loisy, and gives his verdict that 'the Acts story in 9;1-2, while not incredible, is improbable. 'It has 'every mark of being a skilful way of accounting for a strange fact-the conversion of a Jerusalemite in Damascus. The author ventures to take some liberty with the datum of his sources about Damascus itself: Paul's conversion took place as he approached Damascus.' *

'Belief' said Bernard Shaw in the preface to 'Androcles,' is literally a matter of taste.'

'This epigrammatic half-truth must not beguile us into a quick decision between the Lucan and Knoxian accounts of Paul's conversion. The Galatians story does not require us to suppose that Paul's conversion took place in Damascus itself. The crucial

verse states: 'οὕτως ἔρχομαι εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἔμοῦ ἀποστόλους, ἀλλ' ἀπῆλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν, καὶ πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν

(Gal. 1:17)

All this need mean is that Paul went from Damascus to Arabia and then came back again. Nor does the claim that he 'conferred not with flesh and blood', in the polemical context of Galatians exclude the meeting with Ananiás described in Acts 9;17. Paul is concerned to maintain his

* Knox p.39.

theological independence of the Jerusalem leaders, but since Romans 6 implies that he was baptised, then he must have been baptised by somebody: unless we are to assume that he baptised himself like John Smith the Anabaptist, or, like Kagawa, stood in the rain and prayed for the Holy Spirit. The faithful Ananias seems a more likely hypothesis.

The real problems with the Galatians story are twofold: firstly, what are we to think of the statement: ἡμεν δὲ ἐγνωσμένους τῷ προσώπῳ τοῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Gal.1;22.

Secondly, why does Luke not mention the visit to Arabia? How seriously does this damage his credibility?

As to Paul's remaining 'unknown by face to the Christian churches of Judaea', this is held by some to be compatible with the sense 'unknown since I became a Christian': it is so taken by G.S.Duncan in the Moffatt Commentary on Galatians: 'There were, of course, many in the Judaeae churches who had known him in his earlier days and still remembered him: but Paul's point is rather that he never went back among them. This being his meaning, there is no need to say, with Lightfoot, that Judaea, in the country districts of which Paul was not known, is here used in contra-

distinction to Jerusalem, where he was known'.

This middle of the road position* is thus summarised by Duncan: The differences (between Luke and Acts) are not fundamental, and if we had a fuller account we might find an explanation of them. They may usefully remind us that not every statement regarding Paul in Acts 1-15 is to be accepted without criticism. But on the other hand they provide no justification for the all too common assumption of critics...that Acts supplies a quite insecure basis to the reconstruction of the early ministry of Paul.**

Our own conclusion is, that in the polemical context of Galatians, the statement 'ἀγνοούμενος τῷ προσώπῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἰουδαίας' is not incompatible with a previous career as a persecutor in Jerusalem, or with Paul's presence at the death of Stephen. It could well bear the sense: 'After becoming a Christian I did not pay a personal visit to Jerusalem - they never even saw me' - this of course with the exception of the

* Against this compare Hans Lietzmann in HNT on Galatians: 'This clear assertion conflicts with the assumption of Acts 7;58,22;3,26;4and 5, that Paul had lived previously in Jerusalem.'

** G.S. Duncan: The epistle to the Galatians p.32.

visit made in order to ἵστορήσαι κηδῶν. Indeed one can argue, on linguistic grounds, that 'he who persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy' (Gal. 1;23) implies that it was precisely the Judaeen churches which Paul had formerly harassed. To refer 'us' to 'believers generally and therefore those in Damascus in particular' is just as forced a rendering as the one we propose, that ἀγνοούμενος τῷ πρῶτῳ need not exclude a previous persecution, if Galatians is as partial in its polemical statements as Acts is in its eirenic story-telling.

The real problem is the missing visit to Arabia, and the only way to deal with this is to fit it in between Acts 9, verses 25 and 26. Luke gives no chronological link at this point, and he certainly does not imply a gap of three years. Duncan suggests that he went to Arabia for a short period of prayer and meditation, while others have conjectured a first and unsuccessful attempt at missionary work, which succeeded only in antagonising the Nabataean Arabs. * This would explain the attempts by agents of King Aretas to catch the subversive

* Such is the theory of Conzelmann; see Hanson in loc, p.116.

missionary. * (2 Cor. 11:22)

Knox supposes that the story of Paul's conversion while en route from Jerusalem to Damascus is a bold conjecture by Luke, in the same way as he assumed that Jesus must have been born at Bethlehem because that was what the prophets had foretold. Not all will agree that the story of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is of necessity legendary, and the apologetic motive for making Paul grow up in Jerusalem is even slighter. No Old Testament testimony required it. The obstinate fact (conceded by Knox) that Paul was born in Tarsus was against it. If Luke was so much the victim of his own pre-suppositions that he must needs send Paul unhistorically to be educated in Jerusalem, why not go further and suppress the reference to Tarsus altogether? In fact Luke makes Paul employ it as a trump card: 'I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia,' - he says, in order to put the Roman tribune in his place (21;39). So too with the opening of his

* 'So far' - writes Duncan - 'there is nothing in Paul's account that essentially contradicts the narrative of Acts 9, except that one would not naturally gather from Acts that his stay in Damascus and neighbourhood was prolonged for three years'.
(op cit p.30)

address to the crowd at 22;3: 'I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel.' Here the Lucan Paul is concerned to maintain his own staunch Jewish Orthodoxy - which fits in perfectly with his own claim in Gal 1;14 that he *προέκτιστον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ* and that of Philippians 3;5 that he was *κατὰ νόμον φαρισαῖος, κατὰ ῥῆλος δειώων την ἐκκλησίαν*. Theological motivation here is in the eye of the theological critics and not in that of Luke, whose main interest at this point is biographical.

Acts 22;3 is regarded as valid evidence for Paul's youth by W.C. Van Unnik in his interesting essay: 'Tarsus or Jerusalem; the city of Paul's youth.' He discusses with a wealth of philolo-

gical detail the key words *γεγεννημένος ἐν Τάρσῳ τῆς Κιλικίας, ἀνατεταραγμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ, πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ ἐκρίβειαν τοῦ πατρῷου νόμου*.

While numerous critics allowed Paul to spend his teenage years in Tarsus, Van Unnik argues that the words can only mean that he was brought to Jerusalem in infancy and brought up there. The Greeks employed three terms to describe the process of birth and development: *γένεσις* (birth) *τροφή* (nurture) and *παιδεία* (education). When mention is made of *(ἀνα)τρέφω* it is always the sphere of the parental home that is in view....' Lake/Cadbury's

description of the difference between ἀνατρέφω and παιδεύω as the difference between physical and mental training is insufficient, because that would make it possible for the two to take place at the same time, whereas from the texts it is apparent that these words indicate stages on life's way that follow one another, first a stage in the home and after that another stage under the guidance of teachers: the first is translated by 'upbringing' and the second by 'education'. *

Van Unnik then shows that Luke was familiar with the threefold terminology: γένεσις : ἀνατροφῇ : παιδεία : for it occurs in Stephen's speech about Moses, who was born - ἐγεννήθη - and was brought up - ἐνετρέφθη - in his father's house, as well as by Pharaoh's daughter - ἀνεθρέψατο : finally he was learned - ἐπαιδεύθη - in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Van Unnik concludes as follows:

- a) Luke here describes the course and development of Paul's life in a terminology that was familiar to his Hellenistic readers and which suited the Jewish situation.
- b) In this context ἀνατετραχμῶν can refer only to Paul's upbringing in the home of his parents from the earliest years of his childhood until he

* Van Unnik p. 34.

he was of school age: *παιδείας* refers to the instruction which he received in accordance with eastern custom 'at the feet of Gamaliel'..... From the contrast between Tarsus as the place of birth and Jerusalem as the city of the *ἐναργίᾳ* (upbringing in home-circle) and the *παιδεία* (study under Gamaliel) it is clear that according to this text Paul spent the years of his youth completely in Jerusalem.

So much for the Lucan Paul: Van Unnik's close linguistic arguments seem unshakeable. But is the Lucan Paul speaking the historical truth, or is the author of Acts engaging in a conjecture?

Van Unnik comments that 'no other texts are at our disposal' and that 'we cannot see for what reasons Luke would have invented this report, and why he should so readily have constructed a close connection between Paul at the outset of his life and Judaism....It is not clear....on the ground of what texts anyone would be prepared to nullify the clear statement of Acts 22;3 and 26;4-5.'* This is surely right. Luke is a writer concerned, within the limits of his presuppositions, to 'stick to the facts' - It is one thing to conjecture that he gave the Cornelius episode, for example, greater

* Van Unnik p.52 and 53.

importance in his story than its historical position deserved, in order to stress the importance of the gentile mission: it is quite another to suppose that he simply conjectured that Paul was born in Tarsus and brought up in Jerusalem, and then turned his speculations into assertions of fact in a Pauline speech, which, while not intended to convey the apostle's exact words, was nevertheless expected to give a fair summary of his ideas.

Van Unnik draws two important conclusions from his study: firstly, it is not at all unreasonable to think that Paul may have known the historical Jesus, and secondly the apostle's acquaintance with Hellenistic culture must be dated after his conversion to Christianity and not before, as to the famous text 2 Cor. 5;16: εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν, this could well mean - not that Paul had never known the Jesus of history, but that he had known him - and misjudged him - all too well. 'It seems to me unlawful procedure to turn down with a doubtful text of this kind a statement which is as clear as crystal. One ought rather to argue that Acts 22;3 provides support for the view that in 2 Cor. 5;16 Paul does in fact allude to an acquaintance

with Jesus in the time of his earthly life.' *

Here Van Unnik's method comes into direct opposition to that of Knox. The latter tries to write the life of Paul - or some chapters in it - on the basis of the letters only, and regards the statements of Acts, not corroborated by the letters as of very doubtful value. The former regards specific assertions of historical fact in Acts-such as the claim that Paul was brought up in Jerusalem-as trustworthy and not to be overthrown by a controversial interpretation of a text in the letters.

One reason for this different approach is that Van Unnik 'sees no reason to doubt...that the author of Acts was a travelling companion of the apostle... (and) very probably had good information at his disposal about Paul's history.....since the details he gives cannot have been derived from the epistles.'

Knox, on the other hand, does not seem to think that Luke was a contemporary or acquaintance. As so often, the destination arrived at depends on the departure.

Our verdict will tend to depend on the general literary impression which we form of Luke as writer and scholar. Knox thinks that his account of Paul is 'on the whole, no less and no more trustworthy and adequate than the gospel section of the same author's work for the life of Jesus. To say this..

* ib.p.54

is to make not a weak or grudging concession but a strong affirmation of the historical value of Acts.^{b*} Yet this 'strong affirmation' is greatly qualified; if we had another life of Paul to help us then our picture would be a lot more complicated and a lot more accurate. In writing Acts, the author probably had available only brief accounts of particular episodes...or possibly, longer overlapping accounts written from divergent points of view from which the writer had to make selections.' This is the Dibelius view of sources: there were no connected traditions of the apostolic age, and this would apply at whatever date Acts was composed, 'whether that was between 90 and 100 or later.'** Knox does not appear to consider the possibility that it was written earlier.

But it is not necessary to concede that Luke was faced with precisely the same problem in writing the life of Paul as in writing the life of Jesus. Granted that he did not dare to compose speeches for Jesus as he did for Paul. To that extent he allowed himself a freer hand. But it is precisely in the later chapters of Acts that we find those circumstantial details which convinced

* Knox p.22

** ib. p.25.

Eduard Meyer, for example, that we are close to the real course of events. Not in the careful passion narrative do we find the God-fearing Titius Justus whose house was next to the synagogue, or the lecture hall of Tyrannus, or Philip's four unmarried daughters who prophesied. Luke wrote his gospel as a careful and reverent recorder and interpreter of tradition; he writes in Acts with greater freedom as to speeches, but in the latter part of the book at least, in closer proximity to the actual course of events. If he writes 'con amore', that could be because he had himself been caught up in part of the story at least.

To Knox must be conceded, certainly, that the division of Paul's career into 'three missionary journeys' would have amazed the apostle himself. 'If you had stopped Paul on the streets of Ephesus and said to him, 'Paul, which of your missionary journeys are you on now? 'he would have looked at you blankly without the remotest idea of what was in your mind.....that he saw his career as characterised by a series of movements from Jerusalem and back again is surely very unlikely.'

Unlikely indeed - but as unlikely to Luke as to Paul; the 'three missionary journeys' are an

* Knox. p.42.

invention of examiners and text-book writers. The 'first journey' (Acts 13-14) is indeed represented as a tour of evangelism, but it sets out from, returns to, and is sponsored by the church at Antioch, and not that of Jerusalem. From 15; 34-41, when Paul and Barnabas part company, there is no indication of missionary journeys based on Jerusalem. The 'second journey' (as those who have taught Acts for the General Certificate of Education will be aware) comes quite inconclusively to an end at 18;22: 'When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up, (presumably to Jerusalem) and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch'. Paul in his letters", writes * Knox, "never 'goes back' to Jerusalem. He always 'goes up'"; precisely the term that is used here!

One wonders why, if Luke's theological view of Jerusalem so dominates his plan, he is so casual in his reference to the holy city at 18;22. Antioch, and not Jerusalem, seems to be the centre point of Paul's journeys; (which might be an argument in favour of an Antioch source.)

Knox allows, with some reservations, that Paul was a Roman citizen and exercised his right of appeal to Caesar; 'it does fit in nicely with

* ib. p. 42.

Luke's conception of the political innocuousness on Christianity and the cosmopolitan character and interests of Paul!* This surely is a very strong reason for accepting Paul's Roman citizenship as historical fact! Would Luke have dared to invent that citizenship, which is decisively claimed at crucial moments in his story? It was a grave crime to impersonate a Roman citizen, and the emperor Claudius had those who did so executed in the Esquiline field.**

Yet visits to Jerusalem, however interpreted, remain crucial for our understanding of Paul. It is well known that Acts mentions five visits and the letters of Paul refer to three. The relation between these visits has been one of the most keenly disputed problems in New Testament study. Knox claims that there were the three visits and three only. This is the plain evidence of the letters and Luke's five visits are influenced by his own apologetic motives.

The various accounts may be set out as follows

<u>Acts</u>	<u>Letters</u>
A first visit	9, 26-27 X first visit Gal 1; 18

* Knox p. 42

** Civitatem Romanam usurpantes in Campo Esquilino securi percussit. Suet. 25;3.

B 'Famine relief'	11;29,	
visit	12;25	Y Visit after
C 'Council' visit	15;1-29	14 years Gal 2;1-10
D Visit to greet		
the church	18;22	
E Final visit		Z 'Collection'
(and arrest)	21;15	visit Rōmans 15;25

All possible permutations and combinations have been tried to fit these various visits together; it is clear, to start with, that E=Z; the forebodings expressed in Romans 15;31, and Paul's fear about the 'unbelievers in Judaea', are in close accord with the story in Acts 20 and 21. What Paul foresaw in his letter was announced by the prophetic soul of Agabus, when he bound his own feet and hands with Paul's girdle.*

* The fact that Paul was not in fact tied up and handed over to the heathen is surely an argument for the factuality of the story. We agree with Haenchen (p 535) that Luke is heightening the tension for dramatic and literary reasons, but this need not rule out the historicity of his account. Nor is the story obviously conformed to the passion of Jesus, except in so far as both Jesus and Paul were martyrs. The Agabus incident has no parallel in the story of Jesus.

It is also fairly obvious that we should make the equation A=X. Acts tells us that Paul was regarded as suspect after his conversion and was only accepted at Jerusalem as a result of the intervention of Barnabas. Paul in Galatians says that he went to Jerusalem to ἵστορήσαι Κηρὸν, but saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother. Barnabas is not mentioned, but it is clear elsewhere in Galatians that Paul felt especially close to Barnabas is thought and in affection. The right hand of fellowship was offered ἐμοὶ καὶ Βαρνάβᾳ (Gal 2;9) and when the crisis came Paul was shocked to find that even Barnabas would not stand by him: 'ὥστε καὶ Βαρνάβας συνῆλθεν αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει (Gal. 2;1&3;13) It is quite reasonable to assume that the same incident is referred to here-in one account from a committed and passionate standpoint and in the other from an eirenic and to that extent 'edifying' point of view.

While identifying the two 'first visits' Knox insists on the 'utterly different and quite irreconcilable conception of what happened on that occasion. Paul took a solemn oath (ἵδον ἐνὶ κυρίῳ τὸ θεοῦ, ὅτι ψεύδομαι) that he saw none but Peter, and James. Luke declares that initial suspicion was overcome by Barnabas 'who brought him to the apostles.' Knox suggests that Paul took an oath because he had a

premonition that later ages would not believe him and that his biographers would rely not on his own version but on that of Acts!

A discrepancy must be admitted, but it need not be described as 'utterly different and quite irreconcilable.' Luke speaks of initial suspicion overcome with difficulty. Paul gives the impression of a visit surrounded by misunderstanding and controversy. His own honour had been impugned-hence the oath-and he felt that his motives and teachings were misrepresented by his opponents. Luke may well have gone too far in stressing Paul's agreement with the Jerusalem church, but at least he never gave away Paul's main principle - that circumcision should not be imposed on Gentile converts.

But if A=X and E=Z, what about B.C. and D? The neatest solution is to identify B and Y. Paul declares that he went up 'by revelation' (Gal 2;2) and this revelation can then be identified with the prophecy of Agabus about the great famine (Acts 11; 28). Such a view obliges us to think that Galatians is the earliest extant letter of Paul and was written before the peace-making Council of Jerusalem described in Acts 15. The letter, being written at the height of the circumcision controversy, was therefore violent and controversial in tone. We are then required to adopt the 'South Galatian

theory' - that the recipients of the letter were not tribal Galatians (Celtic-speakers who had migrated from Gaul to Asia Minor) but inhabitants of the Roman Province of Galatia, which included the cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe visited by Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13 and 14.

This question has been endlessly debated and with little positive result. Some-like Professor Knox- base their reconstruction on the letters only and discount the reliability of Acts. Others seek to harmonise the two versions. The South Galatian theory is a good example of this approach. Such disagreement among experts may make us think that the problem is insoluble in the light of our present knowledge, and that the solution preferred reflects the psychology of the critic as much as anything else.*

A good example of a 'radical' view is that of Professor Knox himself. He argues that the Acts account is not reliable: 'The principle governing the use of sources which we have adopted would require that we accept even a clear hint in the letters as having more value than the most explicit statement in Acts which contradicts it.' He

* The various theories are clearly summarised by C.S.C. Williams: Acts; pp 22-32.

further maintains that when Acts mentions five visits to Jerusalem and the letters three, Acts is simply wrong. Paul made three visits to Jerusalem and three only.

Knox's theory, briefly summarised, is this: according to Galatians, the only condition accepted by Paul in his discussion with the 'pillars' in Jerusalem was that he should 'remember the poor' (Gal 2;10) 'The poor' were the poor of the Jerusalem church, and the reference is to the great collection which Paul was to undertake and which is referred to in Romans and Corinthians. The Apostolic Conference visit, however, has been muddled by Luke. It did not really take place at 'C' - Council visit - but must be equated with the briefly indicated 'D' - 'visit to greet the church.' Thus the Jerusalem Council took place much later in Paul's career than is usually supposed - and this is because Luke has wrongly concluded that the 'Gentile question' was settled quite early on in the missionary story. This is his own theory, derived from his pious and post - apostolic point of view: the Council visit (C) never took place at all. Luke was either unaware of the real purpose of the great collection - an almost desperate attempt to keep the peace between the Jewish and Gentile wings of Christianity - or he deliberately played it

down in the reference to 'alms and offerings' in Acts 24;17-18.

What then of 'B' - the 'famine relief visit'. Knox writes: 'virtually everyone agrees that it could not have taken place. After all, Paul explicitly excludes the possibility of any visit between the 'acquaintance visit' and the conference visit.' * Knox does not, however, offer a definite explanation of how the story of the (fictitious) famine relief visit arose. 'Some scholars' - he writes, 'have sought to account for the discrepancy by arguing that the conference visit was also a relief visit - a visit with two purposes was mistakenly taken for two visits. Some of these scholars have conceived of this double-purpose visit as happening at the point indicated by Acts 15;1. But however the error is accounted for, the error itself is not denied.'

Knox's theory is closely linked with his view of the Pauline chronology. There simply is not enough time to fit in everything presupposed by the Acts version of events. 'If the conference visit occurred only a few years before the final visit, it is not necessary to suppose a 'silent' period of fourteen to seventeen years, or even more, before

* Knox p. 69.

Paul was launched on the work with which alone either Acts or his letters is concerned, for it is not necessary to crowd that work into a period too short for it. It was from Ephesus, not from Antioch, that Paul made his trip to Jerusalem 'after fourteen years.'

Like all other reconstructions this one is open to objections. Firstly, it is not explicitly stated that the injunction to 'remember the poor', referred to in Galatians, was a contract to undertake a great once-for-all collection on behalf of the Jerusalem church. Other explanations are possible. Knox here follows his method of preferring 'a clear hint' in the letters to the most explicit statement in Acts. But how clear is the hint, after all? 'Remember the poor' could, after all, be an injunction to care for poor people in general. * Nor can we assume (e silentio!) that the great collection was the one and only

* D.R. Hall argues (The Expository Times, LXXII, July, 1971) that Gal 2:10 refers to the Famine relief effort. The apostles asked Paul to remember the poor, and his reply in the αοριστ - ὁ καὶ ἐπορεύεσθαι αὐτὸν πρὸς πηγήσιν - means 'which was the very thing I had made it my business to do' - see N.E.B. margin.

occasion on which Paul sent an offering to the Jerusalem church. If - as the evidence of Josephus would seem to indicate - there really was serious famine in Judaea, then there may well have been other aid programmes, unknown to us. Fraternal delegates from one church to another, in the ancient world, could hardly go empty handed, and Paul himself expresses disappointment that no church except Philippi entered into partnership with him in giving and receiving. (Phil 4;15) *

Equally it seems arbitrary to dismiss the story of the Antioch famine relief effort (Visit B. 11; 29 and 12;25) as entirely fictitious. There is a parallel account in Josephus (Ant. 20;49-51) of the visit of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, to Jerusalem for 'she had conceived a desire to go to the city

* This text indicates the need for caution in accepting the claim made by Knox that the letters of Paul 'reveal not the slightest awareness on his part that he is engaged in great journeys'. (p 40) What about 'In the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia...'? (Phil 4;15) or Romans 15;19 'From Jerusalem as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.' The Jerusalem-Rome axis is a theme of Paul's letter, of Acts and of the hostile Tacitus.

of Jerusalem and to worship at the temple of God, which was famous throughout the world, and to make thank-offerings there.' (προσκυνῆσαι καὶ ἑπαιστέψαι τοῖς ἑσθλοῖς προσερχομένοις) Finding the food situation was critical, she sent to Alexandria for grain and to Cyprus for dried figs. Her son Izates followed this up by sending a great sum of money to the 'leaders of the Jerusalemites' for distribution to the needy.

Luke declares that the famine was foretold by Agabus and that it was to affect the whole world. The veracity of both Luke and Agabus have been criticised on the grounds that the whole world was not affected: but this is surely splitting hairs - the Acts story (as is noted in the Loeb edition of Josephus, Vol 9, p 416) implies that the famine was in any case much worse in Jerusalem than in Antioch.* Queen Helena's special shipment of food from Cyprus and Alexandria - details hardly invented - indicates a real crisis situation which she only discovered on reaching the Holy City. This

* C.C. Torrey conjectured that Luke misunderstood the Aramaic ܐܪܡܝܢ, meaning 'the land' - that is, the land of Palestine -, and thought it meant 'the (whole) world'. A loose expression of thought seems more likely.

corroborates the story in Acts of an emergency effort by the church in Antioch: the Jerusalem poor, who lived permanently on the danger line, were pushed below it by a sudden economic crisis. In such a context the 'famine relief' visit makes perfect sense, and need not be identified with the 'great collection', which clearly had symbolic meaning, took time to prepare and required a special representative delegation to carry it.

Thus, in contrast to Knox, we are prepared to accept the 'plain statement of Acts' about the famine relief effort by the Antioch church. The corroboration by Josephus is surely of considerable weight. It is indeed possible that some of the details are wrong, and that Paul himself did not carry the offering (presumably cash?) to the brethren in Jerusalem.

Thus the radical theory of Knox, that there were three visits only and that Acts is wrong - contrasts with the 'South Galatian' theory of Sir William Ramsay. If Supposing that Galatians is the earliest extant letter, written before the apostolic council, and the Visit B=X, it allows us to retain all five visits mentioned in Acts. But can Galatians, with its close affinities of

of thought to Romans, really be the earliest letter?

Now for a 'middle of the road' position: that of J. Jeremias, himself a strong champion of the 'Antioch source'. His theory* is that the 'famine relief visit 'B' - is a doublet of the Council Visit 'C'. 'It is almost universally agreed that Acts 11;30-12;25, and 15;1-33, describe from different angles, one and the same journey to Jerusalem by Paul. Once it is recognised that Gal 2;1-10 and Acts 15;1-33 describe the same event (the Apostolic Council) then the conclusion is unavoidable. For in Gal 1;10 ff Paul declares most solemnly (1;20 'upon oath') that he had visited Jerusalem only once since his conversion, and the account given in Acts is irreconcilable with this, for it refers to a second stay by Paul in Jerusalem before the Apostolic Council (9;26-30, 11;30/ 12;5). The difficulty disappears if the two journeys (Acts 11;15/12;5 and 15;1-33) are recognised as doublets. This conclusion is supported by considerations of chronology; the famine referred to in Acts 11;27-30 occurred in the period c. A.D. 46-48.... However if we reckon the 17 years of Gal 1;8 and 2;1, and no matter whether we allow Gallio to begin his term of office in the early summer of A.D. 51 or 52, we must place the Apostolic Council in the very same period or at

* ZNW : Vol.39 (1937):p.218ff

least admit that it could have taken place at the same time as the famine.' *

Notice the method followed by Jeremias. He regards the narrative of Acts as substantially accurate - indeed it is here following a very reliable source - but he is prepared to correct the author's apparent mistakes in the light of Paul's letter and the further evidence of Acts itself. Not that a 'clear hint' from the letters is able to prevail over plain statements of Acts - rather are all sources available - including those of archaeology and rabbinic Judaism - employed to reach a reasonable solution. Is not this a valid historical method?

According to the theory of Jeremias Acts 15;1-44 is one of the insertions made into the Antioch source: Firstly Paul learns about the Apostolic Decree in Acts 21;24 as something new. Secondly the word ἀποστόλος is used in chapters 15 and 16; 4

* This story is part of the hypothetical 'Antioch source' in which 11;29 and 12;25 are separated by the account of Peter's escape. It is noteworthy that the order is 'Barnabas and Saul' which hardly indicates an overriding concern to glorify the latter!

in a narrower sense than in 14;4 and 14;14. (In chapter 14 Paul and Barnabas are called apostles, while in 15 the apostles, with the elders, are the church authorities in Jerusalem) Thirdly, the Apostolic Decree is directed to believers in Antioch Syria, and Cilicia, and does not refer to areas evangelised in the 'first missionary journey'. Fourthly, according to 15;33 Silas has returned to Jerusalem, while in 15;40 he is apparently in Antioch and joins with Paul in a new missionary venture. Jeremias concludes: 'The original form of the text becomes clear, as has often been noted, when it is seen that the *διετρεβον* of 14;28 is repeated at 15;35. Verse 16;4 (the publication of the Apostolic Decree) is an editorial link made necessary by the insertion.'

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the 'first missionary journey' to Asia Minor took place after the Apostolic Council, and that the decree was directed to Syria and Cilicia because there were no churches at that time anywhere else.

The theory that the 'first missionary journey' took place after the council has commended itself to various scholars: it was accepted, for example, by Kirsopp Lake, who however, proceed to combine the 'first' and 'second' journeys into one long

trek across Asia Minor.* The really strong reason for accepting the view of Jeremias is the 'hard fact' that the Decree is limited to Syria and Cilicia - a point which cannot be put down to the creative imagination of Luke. In the critical study of Acts, we must stick to whatever **hard** facts there are! But the same point tells against Lake's attempt to combine the first and second journeys; evidence for an itinerary - in the sense of a list of places visited recorded without edifying comment - occurs at the end of the 'first journey' (Perga-Attalia-Antioch) just as it does at the beginning (Paphos-Perga-Antioch in Pisidia: Acts 13;13;14) and there are no valid grounds for rejecting one ^{of evidence} piece for some-thing that happened and accepting another.

While Knox does not rule out the evidence of Acts entirely, he seems to allow it little weight. Consider his analysis of two other questions: Paul's apostleship and his conversion.

Knox recognises that the word apostle has two meanings: 'It could be used in a loose way to mean anyone 'sent out' as an evangelist or missionary - it is regularly so used in the Didache, for example. It appears that Paul also used it in this

* Beg. v.p 237 ff.

sense.* But this is not his customary use of the term; that use 'apostle' always means one who saw the Lord and was commissioned directly by him.

'Certainly when Paul refers to himself as an 'apostle' he invariably has the higher meaning in mind. Now it is noteworthy that Luke prefers to use the word in the same limited sense...This is clearly indicated as early as the first chapter of Acts, where, having named the eleven apostles, the author tells us that Peter raised the question with 'the brethren' (about one hundred and twenty of them) as to who should take the twelfth, or Judas' place....One of the men who has accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us.... must become with us a witness to his resurrection.'

Knox concludes that 'apostle' means: (1) one who was a witness because he had been with the Lord. (2) a missionary. Paul claimed to be an apostle in both senses, because he too had 'seen the Lord', but Luke regarded Paul as an apostle only in sense 2., while for him the foundation apostles were the twelve, minus Judas Iscariot, and plus Matthias.

Here there is certainly a difference between Paul and Luke, but it is one of theology and not of history. Agreement is discovered between Luke

* Knox (p.117) refers to 2 Cor. 8;23.

and Paul as to the two uses of the term 'apostle'; the disagreement is theological, and is stressed by Knox because he agrees, on theological grounds, with Paul and against Luke: Paul's apostleship and theology was a matter of debate and concern in the early church - this can be discovered from Paul's own letters, from Acts, and from the epistle of James. Paul himself, in his highly polemical Galatians, concedes that he 'laid before them (but privately before those who were of repute), the gospel which I preach among the gentiles, lest somehow I should be running, or had run, in vain' (Gal 2;4) So too Paul received the right hand of fellowship from James and Cephas and John (Gal 2;9) and clearly conceded some sort of 'primacy of honour' to the 'so-called pillars' who were apostles before him. Luke used the word 'apostle' in the same double sense as Paul, and if he does not regard Paul as an apostle in the primary sense, it is because of his different view of the resurrection.

Knox has no difficulty in showing that Luke and Paul understood the appearances of the risen Lord in different ways. 'We have only to compare the risen Jesus' appearance to his disciples as described or alluded to in Luke 24;13 - Acts 1;6 to see that Luke thinks of the latter as being of an entirely different order. Indeed, as we have

already had occasion to observe, the interposition of the ascension is enough to indicate Luke's understanding that appearances of the kind which could properly thought of as bearing witness to the resurrection were limited to the brief period of the 'forty days' (Acts 1;3) immediately following the crucifixion. But Paul knows nothing of any ascension - that is as distinct from the resurrection, which was itself exaltation (cf Phil 2;9), and clearly implies that the appearance to him was of the same order as those to the other apostles (1 Cor 15;3-9). He too was an apostle, he too had been a witness to the resurrection; he too had seen the Lord.' *

Knox also 'clearly implies' that he personally finds the Pauline account of the resurrection more congenial than the Lucan one - and proceeds to argue, that Luke, like the later evangelists in general, tended to 'materialise' his account of the risen Lord in answer to gnostic and sceptical denials. No doubt this is indeed one of Luke's motives - it is explicitly stated at Luke 24;39; where the risen Lord says 'a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.'

Yet once more the wedge driven between Luke

* Knox p.119.

and Paul does not go as deep as might appear; while it is true that the former regards the Twelve as being the Apostles 'par excellence', it by no means follows that he regards the experience of Paul on the Damascus road as being 'of an entirely different order.' What impression does the general reader gain from Acts? Is it not the book in which Saul also called Paul saw a vision (heard a voice) and was converted on the road to Damascus? How can it be thought that Paul plays down Luke's encounter with the living Christ when in fact he gives no fewer than three accounts of it in his book? It is explicitly linked with Paul's vocation to the gentiles at 26;17; indeed the whole book of Acts is dominated by the Damascus road.

Secondly, Luke was himself a believing Christian, and his own religious awareness, however crudely expressed, is not unworthy of consideration. He does not tell us that he had entered the third heaven and seen 'things that cannot be told, which man may not utter' (2 Cor 12;3-4). He had no gift for the poetic presentation of religious experience; he was not a John of the Cross or a Henry Vaughan, concerned to make his readers aware of

'God's silent, searching flight,

When my Lord's head is fill'd with dew, and all

His locks are wet with the clear drops of night.

His still, soft call....'

Luke's interest in this field of study is precisely that he shares the common presuppositions of his time in the presentation of faith and religious experience. Vision and dream are the categories he understands; the angel Gabriel appears to Mary, and a man of Macedonia appears to Paul in a vision by night. An angel also appears to Paul during the sea-storm to tell him that he must stand before Caesar. Naturally Luke could only give a second-hand account of Paul's conversion and personal faith, and since such experiences, whether regarded as genuine or not, are by definition ineffable, second hand is of necessity second best. Yet however Luke may have differed from Paul, and no matter how crude his own understanding of the psychology of religion may have been, it does not appear that his view of Paul's vision of the Lord differed greatly from that taken by Paul himself. *

Again it is to be noted that Paul's claim to have 'seen the Lord' is not made without qualification. He declares that ἐσχάτον δὲ πάντων, ὥστερὶ τῷ ἐκτρώματι, ὃ φθῆ καμώ. 1 Cor 15;8
Whatever is meant by 'ektrōma' the word clearly implies that there was something unusual about the

* Footnote on page 359.

* Footnote from page 358.

Luke's portrayal of religious awareness is not as crude as some: his angelic appearances, apart from the appearance of the risen Lord, are made to individuals, and not to groups. Contrast the downfall of Mark Antony, when 'of a sudden was heard the sound of all sorts of instruments, and voices singing in tune, and the cry of people shouting and dancing, like a troop of bacchanals on its way....People who reflected considered this to signify that Bacchus, the God whom Antony had always made it his study to copy and imitate, had now forsaken him.' (Plutarch: Life of Mark Antony Trans A.H. Clough, in Vol. viii of 'Lives' p 228-229.) The men who travelled with Paul to Damascus, 'stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing none' (Acts 9;8) They stand, as it were, on the threshold of Paul's experience. We have compared Luke's presentation of religious awareness with that of certain Jewish writers in Ch. 3.

appearance to Paul. Johannes Munck in an interesting discussion concluded that two meanings were possible: 'If we are to assume 'E' to refer to the statement in v. 9 that Paul has persecuted the church of God, ὥσπερ τῷ ἐκτρώματι must be taken as expressing that Paul is the most wretched of men, only to be compared to a stillborn child...In using the word 'E' Paul ranks himself with Judas Iscariot.'... 'The other possible interpretation is to be found in the fourth significance of 'E' as something embryonic, that needs to be formed... Paul as he was when Christ met him on the road to Damascus.' *

One thing is clear about this obscure and emotive expression: Paul is distinguishing himself from the others who saw the Lord: Cephas, the twelve, the five hundred brethren at once, and James. While he claimed apostleship by virtue of the Lord's appearance to him, he also recognised that he stood apart from the other witnesses to the resurrection.

Paul's view of the resurrection is more congenial to Knox precisely because it is less 'crude' or 'primitive' than that of Luke; it is more easy to make sense of in the post-scientific age. Such a

* Paulus tamquam abortivus: N.T. Essays ed.

A.J.B. Higgins, p. 190.

judgement is however a philosophical or theological and not a historical one. It could be argued Luke's account is valuable precisely because it gives us a second opinion from a humane person who shared the general mental outlook of his own day. If Paul indeed 'felt his heart strangely warmed', how else could Luke have portrayed that experience other than he has done in Acts?

Thus the objections raised by Knox against Luke's account of Paul turn out to be theological rather than historical. Knox seems to agree that Paul was an apostle in the primary sense because he had 'seen the Lord! Luke's account of the ascension is rejected and his graphic and thrice repeated description of Paul's conversion is found wanting. But no historian can say whether or not Paul was an apostle - his right to the title has been contested from his own day to this! In the same way Haenchen brings against Luke the gravest of charges from a Lutheran standpoint. He has propounded a theology of glory instead of the cross; or in the terminology of 'another gospel' influential in the twentieth century, he has 'indulged in the cult of personality' and turned Paul into a fearless wonder-worker who was successful at every step. That Luke admired Paul must be admitted by all; that he failed to grasp the complexities of his thought is not

to be denied; that he gave only a partial account of his career must also be conceded. But what he tells us could well come from a contemporary, or even an erst-while companion of the apostle. For the 'outer facts' of Paul's career, then, if not for his inner psychology Acts remains a primary and not a secondary source. To the dictum of Knox: 'a fact only suggested* in the letters has a status which the most unequivocal statement of Acts, if not otherwise supported, cannot confer,' we oppose our own ; 'Unequivocal assertions of historical fact in Acts, should, on the grounds of the author's general credibility, be accepted as true unless they are clearly contradicted by unambiguous statements in the epistles or by extra-Biblical evidence.' Luke the historian may only have been a gifted amateur, a country parson among historians, but his account of Christian beginnings cannot be ruled out of court on the basis of a brilliant and one-sided interpretation of the fragmentary correspondence of Saul of Tarsus.**

* p.33: This ambiguity is apparent. How do you know it is a fact if it is only suggested?

* See pages 509 and 510: additional note 2.

CHAPTER 7

ANOTHER LOOK AT SOURCES (1): THE ITINERARY.

The author of Acts must have had sources of some kind. Even a historical novel is not entirely a work of fiction, for the author weaves his story around figures of the past whom he believes really existed. His thoughts - coloured indeed by his own education and study - are allowed to dwell on characters whose career and personality has caught his interest, until, by the 'shaping spirit of imagination' fact and fiction are woven into one.

An element of imaginative reconstruction is inseparable from any historical writing that goes beyond the compilation of annals or the assembling of archaeological data. The account which Tacitus gives of imperial Rome tells us a good deal about Tacitus, and Sir Ronald Syme's study of Tacitus also tells us something about Sir Ronald Syme.

Since all but the most sceptical agree that Luke was not a mere forger of a writer of imaginative fiction* it seemed good to many to attempt to identify

* A valuable study of the relation between creativity and historical research is provided by C.V.Wedgewood: in Truth and Opinion, p.62-81 'Literature and the Historian'. 'It cannot be denied that the literary historians are open to criticism for failures of perception and failures of scholarship which can at times be traced directly to their literary technique. Macaulay's denunciation of Strafford is noble...but by striking off so splendid a phrase as 'the Satan of the apostasy' Macaulay introduced a Miltonic grandeur into our vision of the man and the epoch, which makes it hard to bring the mind down again to the...level on which alone historical enquiry can be safely pursued.'

the sources he used, as a preliminary task in the reconstruction of Christian origins: such was the motivation for source criticism. Thus in 1895 Johannes Jüngst prefaced his work with a quotation from J. Weiss: 'Above all the source criticism of Acts must be placed on a firm footing as soon as possible, and by common effort. 'That pious hope was not to be fulfilled. Half a century later Dom Jacques Dupont was to sum up the results in his succinct study: The sources of Acts. 'The predominant impression' - he wrote - 'is certainly very negative.'

Several scholars have divided the critical study of Acts into epochs. E. Trocmé, for example, has spoken of:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1) Early Researches | 1800 - 1840 |
| 2) 'The age of Tübingen' | 1840 - 1880 |

(This was the classic period of 'Tendenzkritik')

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 3) 'The pilgrimage to the sources' | 1881 - 1905 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|

This was the time of critical dissection in many fields of literary study from Homer to the Pentateuch. Its more extreme manifestations may be illustrated by the complaint which Jüngst made against Clemen.* 'But how could there be time for these eight layers, (HH, Hpe, Redaktor, HPa, R, Rj, Ra, Zwischenredaktor) to be included in the Acts?.' How indeed?

* Die Quellen der Apostelgeschichte: - Gotha, 1895. p.9.

4) 'The age of Harnack'

1905 - 1930

In this period, writes Trocmé, the reputation of Luke the beloved physician was somewhat unexpectedly rehabilitated by the greatest New Testament scholar of the day.* Harnack showed that there was no difference in vocabulary between the so-called 'we passages' and the rest of the book. The use of medical terminology was held to show that the author could have been a doctor (here Harnack followed Hobart: 'The medical language of St.Luke - Dublin, 1882) and so the ancient church tradition was vindicated after all.

Harnack saw no problem about sources in the later part of Acts, since this part of the work was written by a companion of Paul from his own recollections, who used the pronoun 'we' in places, to indicate 'I was there'. In the earlier part of the book, however, Harnack claimed to distinguish two parallel sources: 'A' - of considerable historical value, and 'B' - which was largely legendary.

Thus for example:

Chapter 2: Recension B of the history of the outpouring^u of the Holy Spirit and its consequences.

Chapter 3: 1-5:16: Recension A of the more intelligible history of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and its

* 'Luke the physician' (English ed, 1907) 'The Acts of the Apostles': 1909.

consequences.*'

A third source postulated by Harnack was that of Antioch, which he traced in 6:1-8:4, 9:31-11:18, 11:19-30, and 12:25 - 15:35. This 'Antioch source' has indeed proved to have more staying power than many other critical theories, and we shall return to it later.

4) 'The contemporary period', (1930 -)

The 'assured results' of source criticism were soon under attack, and in Lucan studies the theories of Harnack never commanded such wide acceptance as did, for example, the Four Document hypothesis of Streeter in the field of Synoptic studies. Moreover, the rise of Form-criticism led to increasing scepticism about the existence of extended written sources behind the Gospels and Acts. So much so, that as Trocmé writes, 'critics have more and more abandoned the idea of lengthy sources and have tended to prefer the hypothesis that the author to Theophilus used isolated stories often very brief, which he may have received in written or oral form. The only source which rises, by virtue of length or content, above the level of popular story telling is the 'travel-diary' of the second part.'

This travel document is in fact the 'Itinerary'

* See chapter 4.

which Martin Dibelius, in a series of influential articles, claimed to discern behind the later chapters of Acts.

THE ITINERARY.

As a pioneer form-critic, M.Dibelius was sceptical about the results of source criticism. But form-critical techniques could not be applied to Acts in the same way as to the synoptic writers: in the Gospels 'authors preserve the forms created by tradition.'* This, however, was not so in Acts, where Luke 'employed a much higher standard of writing than in the gospel'. In other words, the author was not bound, in Acts, by a tradition of holy words which had to be respected. He had the right and indeed the duty to recast his material in the manner required by Hellenistic historiography: and so, unless and until the extent of Luke's editorial work has been determined 'we must consider as hopeless every attempt to divide entirely into different sources the text of Acts as a whole.'**

It has been thought that one sure sign of a source was the presence of the first person plural and the famous 'we-passages'. This idea goes back as far as Schleiermacher, and so radical a critic as Overbeck could speak of 'the memoir, written by Paul's companion,

* Essays p.4.

** ibid p. 2-3.

which is betrayed by the ἡμεῖς - sections.'* Not so, answers Dibelius: the appearance of 'we' need not of necessity be the sign of a source. In the story of the shipwreck, for example, 'the author introduced his 'we' into an account which he had, in order to indicate when he was present. The 'we', would then be, not as was once thought, an original element, but an addition.' However, since Dibelius believed on other grounds, that Acts was written by a companion of Paul, he still regarded the appearance of 'we' as an indication of the author's presence.

Dibelius replaced the 'we-source' theory with that of the 'itinerary'. He elaborated this suggestion at several points in his essays. 'Everywhere it seems that there underlies the account of the journeys an itinerary of stations where Paul stopped, an itinerary which we may suppose to have been provided with the notes of his journeys, of the founding of communities and of the results of evangelising.'**

What did this itinerary include? Such documents certainly existed in the ancient world for the guidance of travellers, pilgrims, imperial messengers, and later on, of pilgrims.*** Thus the Itinerarium Burgidalse

* Acts: by Zeller and Overbeck Vol.1.p.43.

** Essays p.5.

*** See Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina (LXXV)
Itineraria et alia Geographica.

takes the traveller from Gaul to Jerusalem. It remains a mere list of mileages until it reaches the Holy Land, where it becomes much more loquacious, mentioning for example, at Caesarea the ' balneus Cornelii centurionis, qui multas elymosunas faciebat.' On arrival at Jerusalem it details all the pious attractions with great care. On the other hand the *Itinerarium Egeriae* is written in a much more voluble style. Etheria was a well to do and pious lady who narrated her travels in the first person. The object of her writing seems to have been to inform and edify her 'dominae sorores' who cannot go on pilgrimage, rather than to provide a guidebook for those who can.*

The *Itinerarium Antonini*, on the other hand, has been thought to offer a kind of general guide to the roads of the Empire. But this view is rejected by the '*Dictionnaire d'Archaeologie Chrétienne*', which claims that this Itinerary too was a pilgrim document, in which all roads led to Jerusalem.

But did such material exist in the New Testament? A.D. Nock was prepared to agree that it possibly did. He noted Plutarch's criticism of those who 'gather from an official journal (ephemerio) statistics about 'how often I had a meeting with either Hedeia or

* The pilgrimage of Etheria: ed. McClure and Feltoe.
SPCK Etheria's travels have been assigned to the reign of Valens or Justinian.

Leontion', or 'where I drank Thasian wine', or 'on what twelfth of the month I had the most sumptuous dinner.'* But granting the possibility of some such document as Dibelius suggests, is there any strong internal evidence - external there is none - for assuming that it existed?**

Firstly the itinerary theory is founded on the observation that in Acts, as from chapter 13, there are relatively detailed accounts of the travels of the missionaries. A good example is 17;1. 'Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.' Dibelius claimed that Luke had no possible motive for inventing dry details of this kind. 'An itinerary seems to have formed the skeleton for the central part of Acts.' (chs 13-21) The most precise definition which Dibelius gave of the contents of the Itinerary is found in the essay 'Paul on the Areopagus.'^{***} Dibelius speaks of 'information about the stations on

* Plutarch: Loeb ed. XIV p.37.

** The itineraries of William of Worcestre includes daily mileages in note form, 'we passages' and detailed records for the History of Britain which he planned. He was on the road from 1478, and had, of course, an antiquarian interest.

*** Essays p.69

the journey, the hosts, the preaching and the results of preaching, the founding of communities, disputes, and whether voluntary or forced departures. 'The reason for the preservation of such documents was, in the view of Dibelius, 'to give guidance for missionaries who might travel that road again.'

Dibelius argued strongly that Luke did not have extended written sources at his disposal. Instead he inserted traditional - and probably oral - tales about the doings of the apostles into his itinerary framework as best he could. The locus classicus for this idea is the Lystra incident. The apostles reach 'Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia,' at 14;6. The story of how they were mistaken for gods is then recounted, (vv 8-19), and then, after being stoned, Paul goes on to Derbe - which he had already reached at 14;6! The plausible suggestion is that the 'apotheiosis' tale has been inserted into the brief and uninformative itinerary which was all that reached the writer in written form. The same suggestion has been made about the 'Philippian jailer' incident, where verses 25 - 34 of ch. 16 can be removed neatly from the narrative, and with them the embarrassment of the miraculous earthquake. 'Both here and at Lystra,' wrote Dibelius, 'the D text covers up a seam, in this

case a seam between two narrative units.'*

What does the itinerary theory do, if accepted, to the reputation of Luke the historian? It surely shows him as a writer who made a serious attempt to find out and record what actually happened, and to a considerable extent succeeded.** In the early chapters of Acts, Luke had, according to Dibelius, no such 'guiding thread'. 'We are left with traditional separate stories of very unequal value, they are mainly in the style of legend: that is, the emphasis lies on the miraculous element and the pious character of the people involved in the stories.*** Dibelius therefore allowed for no written sources in the Acts except for the Itinerary in 13-21. The sea-voyage then was, he thought, a literary piece taken over by Luke and written up with the 'we' addition, in order to indicate his own presence.

Luke as seen by Dibelius was therefore a historian with a strong claim to be trusted. 'His only 'Tendenz',

* Codex Bezae (D) says that the magistrates had been frightened by the earthquake, which according to other manuscripts they had not noticed.

** Dibelius worked out the implications of the itinerary theory for the life of Paul in a small book, 'Paulus' completed after his death by W.G.Kümmel.

*** Essays p.106.

if we wish to speak of such a thing, was to represent Paul's missionary road from Antioch to Rome as the divinely-willed path of the Christian faith from Syria to the centre of the pagan world. This attitude obviously persuaded him to omit all detailed circumstances of the journey, and to rely only on the leading of the spirit, in describing the important move from Asia Minor to Macedonia and Greece. He also handled the apostle's last journey through Greece in a quite summary manner, obviously because it did not carry the gospel further into the world (20:1-16)' The sea voyage, on the other hand, was recorded in detail because it represented 'Christ's triumphal procession to the capital of the world.'*

As for Paul's career as a whole; Dibelius thought that we could trust the itinerary, but that the tales of Paul's life which Luke collected - including that of his conversion - presented material on which the historian would find it hard to give a decisive verdict. Historical reliability would vary in inverse proportion to 'the number of motifs from popular folk tales.'**

The work of Dibelius on the Itinerary theory was not to remain unchallenged. While A.D.Nock, in an

* Paulus p.14

** Paulus p.13

extended review,* suggested that there might have been several such documents from different people,** E. Haenchen has come to reject the itinerary theory in its 'classical' formulation by Dibelius, and G. Schille has argued that it is doubtful whether any such itinerary ever existed.***

Schille identified 5 'foundation pillars' (Grundpfeiler) of the itinerary theory:

1. The doublet Acts 14;6 and 14;20:(That is:the repetition of the statement that Paul went to Derbe, with the Lystra episode in between). Schille thought that this need not imply an extended itinerary, but only a short account of the visit to Lycaonia.
2. The insertion of the Philippi tradition into the narrative (that is, the miraculous escape of Paul and Silas has been added to the itinerary.)
3. Unevenness in the framework of some speeches. For example, Dibelius wrote: 'After the Areopagus address and after Paul has gone $\epsilon\kappa \mu\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\omicron\upsilon \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$, a few converts are mentioned at 17;34. The source is beginning again.'

* In Gnomon, 1953.

** E. Haenchen: 'Das 'wir' in der Apg.und Das Itinerar.'
Z.Th.K.58 (1961)

*** G. Schille 'Die Fragwürdigkeit eines Itinerars der Paulusreisen'.(Theologische Literaturzeitung,1959(cols 165-174)

4. Uniform treatment of stopping places, thus, for example, we read names of stopping places in 'railway timetable' fashion: Salamis 13:35, Derbe 14:21, and Perga, 14:25.

5. Stylistic difference between 13-21 and 1-12; 22.

Schille then puts forward four objections of his own to the theory of Dibelius.

1. Uniformity (Einlinigkeit) in the arrangement of material. Paul's travels were more complicated than Acts suggests. 2 Cor. reveals 'a lively missionary activity by the apostle between Macedonia Achaia, Illyria and Asia. 'Luke on the other hand places traditions about Philip before those of Peter, and stories about Antioch only after those of the mission to Israel. This step-by-step method is, says Schille, a 'law of popular literary art.'

2. Signs of a vanished arrangement of individual traditions. There were, for example, two 'foundation legends' about the church at Philippi: the story of Lydia and the story of the jailer. 1 Thessalonians tells us that Silas took part in the foundation of the Philippian church, while the fact that 'originally only Paul speaks to Lydia....speaks

against the Philippian origin of v 13-15.* So too Paul's hurried departure from Thessalonica (17:5ff) and Corinth (18;14-17). Paul could not have aroused bitter opposition in a short 'stopover' visit, and he was forbidden to stay longer by the rules of Didache 11;4-6.

3. Narrative links and freedom of composition (Bindung und Freizügigkeit)

The lists of stopping places referred to by Dibelius do not go so far towards demonstrating the existence of an itinerary as he supposed. Luke knew an old tradition about a mission to Lycaonia which he followed in ch 13; the same tradition is mentioned in 2 Tim 3;11. The route through Macedonia and Achaëa he could have put together himself from 'foundation traditions' which he gathered from local churches, or deduced from the Pauline epistles. As for the stopping places pure and simple (blosse Reisestationen) these are either towns where churches existed, like Ptolemais (21;7) or Sidon (27;3) or else harbours and islands. The former group appear towards the end of Acts in

* J. Dupont (Sources p.153-155) deals severely with these suggestions, claiming that the detail of the text has little interest for Schille. There are two halting places - Amphipolis and Apollonia, in Acts 17;1, whereas Schille mentions only the first.

order to give the reader 'a general picture of what has already been achieved'. This could also have an apologetic motive, to counteract the charge that the Christians were a tiny minority.

4. 'List of stopping places' as a literary form (Gattung)

Schille's last objection is that Dibelius cannot point to any parallel list of stopping places to set beside his supposed itinerary. One could hardly follow in Paul's footsteps with the aid of the information given in Acts. Moreover, Paul and his generation expected the imminent return of the Lord; they never considered the possibility of successors, and the itinerary theory presupposes a 'Lucan' view of ongoing mission in the present world. Finally Dibelius cannot point to a single example of an 'Itinerary'; the later guides for pilgrims, like that of Etheria, presuppose a continuing sacred history and are nothing to the point. The itinerary theory is nothing but the last remnant of those source critical theories which Dibelius so sharply criticised. Schille, concluded, 'Reference to the literary creativity of Luke may explain more than even M. Dibelius supposed.'

Dom Jacques Dupont remarked that 'the most devastating treatment that can be given to (Schille's theories) is to examine them closely.'* It is clear that he starts

* Dupont Sources p.156.

from form-critical presuppositions, and that certain highly questionable assumptions are made. How do we know that Paul read the Didache for example? Does Lydia, the seller of purple, look like a 'foundation legend'? Is it not too simplistic a view of human nature that none of the earliest Christians, with their intense adventist hope, would ever keep a diary? Their Master himself, even if he thought that the end of the world was at hand, still found time to consider the lilies of the field. Might not some simple soul have hoped to present his diary to the Lord at his appearing? The fact that we cannot isolate the written sources that underlie Acts does not, repeat not, entail that there were none.

The strong point in favour of the itinerary theory is the list of specific towns and stopping places that appear in Acts 13ff. Schille's attempt to explain this by reference to Luke's apologetic motives will not do: why did not Luke then follow this method all the way through his book? Why did he not specify 'all the towns' in which Philip preached between Azotus and Caesarea (Acts 9;40)? If he wants to add credibility to his narrative, why does he so lamely write that 'as Peter went here and there among them all' (9;52) he finally got to Lydda? Schille claims that the presence of these precise travel indications in the later part of Acts is intended to impress the reader by 'the introduction

of new material and by repetition'. But Acts aims to impress the reader all the way through. There was 'much joy' in the (unnamed) city of Samaria in which Philip performed signs, (8;8), and the result of the healing of Aeneas, according to the claim of 9;35, is that 'all the residents of Lydda and Sharon... turned to the Lord.' The fact is that the later part of Acts does not display the characteristics of a popular folk tale at all; it looks like the work of a writer who is trying to handle source material of various kinds as a historian and a literary man.

Schille is certainly right to point out that the itinerary theory is an exercise in source criticism; but it is none the worse for that. He is correct, too, to point out that there could have been more than one record - the Lycaonia mission might be recorded separately from that to Macedonia. Lastly there is force in the argument that any 'Itinerary' could not have been a 'guide-book' like the Pilgrimage of Etheria. Nobody in the first century would have thought of anticipating H.V.Morton and following 'In the steps of St. Paul'. On the other hand, some of the missionaries could well have kept 'ephemerides' like their contemporaries. One cannot dispute the sober judgement of A.D.Nock: 'It is clear that records or unusually detailed memories existed for parts of the missionaries' journeys.'

Such a view is accepted by Haenchen.^{*} He considers that there was no travel document behind the 'first missionary journey' of Acts 13-14. On the other hand the 'second journey' (15;36-18;22) was based on the reminiscences of one of Paul's companions; possibly Timothy. So too in the 'third journey' (18;23-21;17) Luke freely rewrote some written source, as he did for the account of the voyage to Rome and the shipwreck. There was, however, no 'Itinerary' in the sense which Dibelius presupposed.

But does not this theory take us back to the idea of a 'we' source once again? Haenchen regards the use of 'we' as a literary device by Luke. For example, it appears at 16;10 at the crucial point when the mission moves into Europe: 'in order to guarantee the historicity of a decisive moment in the Pauline mission by reference to the eyewitness role of his source of information.'^{**} It appears again in the story of the fatal journey to Rome so that the reader can feel personally involved, as it does on the voyage to Rome,

* Das Wir in der Apg und Das Itinerar' Z.Th.K.(58)1961.

** 'Lukas in 16;10 einen entscheidenden Augenblick der Paulinischen Mission durch die Hindeutung auf die Augenzeugenschaft seines Gewährsmannes historisch sichert.'

which Luke has rewritten with 'sovereign freedom'.*

But would ancient readers have understood that they were meant to feel personally involved at these points? Why not add a 'we' at other crucial moments such as the conversion of Cornelius or the Council of Jerusalem? Would not ancient readers have assumed that here the author himself appeared on the scene as a member of the party? Such was the conclusion of A. D. Nock: 'I know of only one possible parallel for the emphatic use of a questionable 'we' outside literature which is palpably fictional.' Nock was prepared to think of 'several distinct travel diaries covering separate periods: e.g. that of the collection for the saints at Jerusalem (cf 20:5), while he regarded the story of the sea-voyage as 'an authentic transcript of the recollections of an eyewitness, with the confusion and the colouring which so easily attach themselves to recollections...one can be unduly exigent in considering the consistency of a narrative.' Thus Nock concluded that the 'I' who addressed Theophilus and the 'we' of Acts were one and the same.

Which brings us back finally to the prologue and the mysterious words *παρηκολούθηκόντι ζῶσιν πάντιν ἀκριβῶς*. Cadbury argued that the crucial *παρηκολούθηκόντι* does

* 'Der Leser...sich unmittelbar mit dem Leben des Paulus verbunden fühlen kann.'

not mean 'to investigate, research,' but to follow as an eyewitness or with contemporary knowledge'.*

There is here a real claim to $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\psi\iota\alpha$ which, if conventional in ancient works, must still be taken seriously: 'the claim of contemporary acquaintance may be attributed to the participle as a certainty; the claim of actual presence is at least a possibility.'

Haenchen seeks to refute this: He discussed Cadbury's claim that $\pi\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\omicron\lambda\omega\theta\eta\kappa\omicron\tau\iota$ means 'to be directly involved in the events'. (an den Ereignissen unmittelbar beteiligt sein). 'It is beyond question that the verb has this meaning in many places. It seems equally clear to me that it does not have this meaning here, because $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\iota\beta\omega\varsigma$ cannot be connected with the word in this sense.' (Denn mit diesem Sinn lässt sich $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\iota\beta\omega\varsigma$ nicht verbinden.) So too the word $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$ stands in the way of Cadbury's theory. He could perhaps take $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$ in connection with $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\iota\beta\omega\varsigma$, and translate; 'It seemed good to me, having for long been personally involved, to write everything correctly and in order for you,'; on the other hand J.M.Creed claimed that 'the

* H.J.Cadbury: The knowledge claimed in Luke-Acts.

Expositor, Vol.CCLV p.401. The texts in which

$\pi\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\omicron\lambda\omega\theta\eta\kappa\omicron\tau\iota$ occurs are Demosthenes De Corona 172, Adv.

Olymp.3.40 p.357, De Falsa Leg.257 p415 (Loeb ed.) Also

Epictetus at 2;16 and 33.

rhythm and balance of the sentence require that ἀκριβῶς should be taken with παρηκολούθηκέτι. '*

If certainty as to this precise linguistic point remains out of reach, we are driven back on general literary considerations, and notably on the claim by Nock that the use of 'I' means what it appears to mean - the personal presence of the author - 'outside literature which is palpably fictional.' What in fact is palpably fictional? Dibelius noted that 'It is not Mark's gospel but Peter's, that claims first person reporting.'** A valid point - but Luke's gospel does not include 'first person reporting' either! The author did not add an exciting 'we' to the passion narrative! Haenchen, who holds that Luke was 'no novelist, but a historian', regards the 'we' passages as genuine in that they indicate the presence of an eye-witness in the source. But would ancient readers, knowing that they had before them a work 'not palpably fictional' - have understood them in this sense? Would they not have assumed that the 'I' of Acts 1;1 was the same as the 'we' of Acts 16;10? Do not the linguistic arguments of Cadbury about the precise meaning of παρηκολούθηκέτι then gain added weight?

Dupont is right when he claims that refusal to

* J.M.Creed : The gospel according to St.Luke p.4.

** Essays p.204.

regard Luke-Acts as the work of a companion - not necessarily a very close companion - of Paul, 'is essentially founded on considerations not of a literary, but a theological order.' The linguistic evidence points in the opposite direction. While the format of a precise 'Itinerary' or travel diary cannot be exactly defined, some such record clearly existed. If Haenchen's explanation of the 'we' is too subtle for ancient as for modern readers, then we are left with two possibilities: either Acts is a work of fiction like the Acts of Paul and Thekla, or Aristeas, or the life of Apollonius of Tyana, or it must be by someone who had personally taken part in the later events of his story. The theological objections we discuss elsewhere. But apply them in another field: the triumphal column of Marcus Aurelius, here is 'theologia gloriae' with a vengeance! The Marcus who appears here, serene amid the storm of war, for whose sake the rain god sheds his blessing on the hard pressed Romans, before whose face a German siege engine is struck by lightning, who contemplates the severed heads of enemy soldiers paraded in triumph; such a Marcus cannot be the same person as the author of the confessions, nor can the sculptors who portrayed this Θεός Ἐν ᾧ have been his contemporaries!*

* Marcus Aurelius, by Anthony Birley, London 1966.p242-3.

But if in fact the column was erected by contemporaries of Marcus after all, why should not Acts have been written - as the linguistic evidence seems to indicate - by a sometime companion of Paul?

CHAPTER 8

ANOTHER LOOK AT SOURCES (2): AN ANTIOCH SOURCE ?

Source criticism of Acts is less sure of itself now than it was in the days of Johannes Jüngst, who was able to divide the book confidently between sources A, B and Redaktor. While he himself protested against the excessive confidence displayed by other critics, he felt able to determine in detail the contributions made by each source: Thus R wrote 1;1-5, while A supplied verses 6-8, and B, 9-11. Verse 12, however, ('Then they returned to Jerusalem...') was divided between the two. Such happy certainty about the identification of sources has now, for better or worse, passed away. Thus E.K. Chambers quoted S.T. Coleridge, who said 'I think I could point out to half a line what is really Shakespeare's in 'Love's Labours Lost' and some other of the not entirely genuine plays.' Chambers commented, 'Coleridge being Coleridge, it is needless to say that he never performed that task.'*

New Testament Scholars were made of sterner stuff than S.T.C., however, and if they failed, it was not for want of trying.

1) HARNACK: A notable contribution was made to the study of Acts by A. von Harnack, whose books 'Luke the Physician' and 'The Acts of the Apostles' still offer

* Aspects of Shakespeare; E.K. Chambers p.26.

the student a mine of information and are a pleasure to read. Harnack put forward two theories as to the earlier part of Acts: firstly that in chapters 1-5 there was a report in duplicate of events in the early church, and secondly that a written source, composed from the point of view of Antioch, was used by the author in the central section of the book. The 'Antioch source' has proved to possess more staying power than many other critical theories. It was ably supported by J. Jeremias in 1937 (ZNW Vol 36 p205-221) and has since been accepted by R. Bultmann.*

As defined by Harnack the 'Jerusalem-Antiochene source' included the following:

- 1) 6;1-8;4. The Hellenists and the Stephen incident: persecution of the church.
- 2) 11;19-30. Preaching to Gentiles at Antioch - return of Saul to Tarsus. Famine foretold by Agabus. Famine relief delegation from Antioch to Jerusalem.
- 3) 12;25-15;35. Return of the delegation to Antioch. Establishment of the 'Antioch mission'. 'First Missionary journey.' Controversy over gentile church membership and circumcision. Council of Jerusalem and a compromise settlement.

(It will be noted that Harnack's Antioch source is already overlapping the area in which Dibelius found

* New Testament Essays ed A.J.B.Higgins p.79.

traces of an itinerary - i.e. Acts 13-14.!)

Harnack sought to show that the 'Jerusalem-Antioch source', as he called it, came to Luke in written form. (He conjectured that it might be the work of Silas - AA p 202).

He noted first a verbal connection between 8;4 and 11;19. The former reads οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες διήλθον εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον

This, thought Harnack, was a sign of a digression that was concluded at 11;19. οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες ἀπὸ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς γενομένης ἐπὶ Στεφάνου διήλθον εἰς Φοινίκης καὶ Κύπρου καὶ Ἀντιοχείας μηδεὶν λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον εἰ μὴ μόνον Ἰουδαίοις.

This, indeed, is not conclusive, so it was further noted by Harnack that only in the suggested source were the believers called οἱ μαθηταί, while the apostles were called οἱ δώδεκα. Moreover, the detailed lists of names found in 6;19 and 13;1 were without parallel in the rest of the book, and indicated a written source, as did 11;19-20, the preaching to the Gentiles by the nameless evangelists from Cyprus and Cyrene.

Harnack offered a further argument to prove that the tradition which speaks of Νικόλαον προσήλυτον Ἀντιοχείας. (6;4) was in written form. This concerns the accusations made against Stephen. His speech against the temple had also included an attack on the law as such, and had in fact been toned down by Luke. It originally concluded

with a peroration in which the enthusiastic Hellenist had actually declared that 'Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this temple and change the customs which Moses handed down to us.' (7;14) Such an argument, which is really making a conjecture to support a conjecture, may save the credit of the Antioch source while of course leaving Stephen 'guilty as charged'.

2) WENDT: Harnack was not indeed the 'only begetter' of the Antioch source theory. Something very similar had already been suggested by W.W.Wendt.*

In opposition to Ed.Meyer: he regarded the 'we' passages as the sign of a source, and not merely of the presence of the author. Turning to the earlier part of the book, Wendt declared, for example, that the 'first missionary journey' (13-14) was the 'direct continuation' of the story of the Antioch church(11;19) which, in itself continued the history of Stephen and the Hellenists (6;1-8;4). Relying partly on the assumption that the western text 'we' of 11;28 was original**, Wendt was able to carry his source - modified and adapted by the editor - right to the end of the book.

He summarised his theory thus: 'The author of Acts

* (ZNW, 1925, vol. 24. p. 294-305)

** 'There was great rejoicing: and while we were present one of them named Agabus foretold.....etc.'

took the 'we' passages from a source. But to this source belonged also the main component of the whole story of Paul's missionary work and his imprisonment. And this source, revised in the second half of Acts, was the same as the one from which the author had already in the first part, created the story of Stephen.(6;1-8 ;4) the founding of the Antioch church (11;19-28) and the first missionary journey of Paul which began at Antioch!*

Such a view, argued Wendt, was not the 'mere caprice of an unbridled criticism', and his theory was to be given a distinguished defence by J.Jeremias in 1937.

3) JEREMIAS:** Jeremias attempts to demolish the double-source theory of Harnack, as applied to Acts 1-5. He maintains that the only source which can be reconstructed with any probability is in fact the Antioch source, which he defines as follows:

1) 6;1-8;4 Stephen and the Hellenists: (first insertion - the Philip story - 8;5-40)

2) 9;1-30 The conversion of Saul:(which Harnack had derived from a separate source). (second insertion: the story of Peter and Cornelius; 9;31 - 11;18)

3) 11;19-30 Preaching to Gentiles at Antioch: famine relief delegation to Jerusalem.

* Die Hauptquellen der Apostelgeschichte:ZNW:1925,vol.24.

** ZNW 1937 Vol.36.

(Third insertion: arrest and escape of Peter: the death of Herod Agrippa I. 12;1-24).

4) 12;25-14;28: Founding of the Antioch Mission: first missionary journey. (Fourth insertion: The Council of Jerusalem; 15;1-33).

5) 15;35ff. 'Second missionary journey'. - Jeremias is prepared to 'leave open the question' as to whether the 'Antioch source' continued through to the end of the book. But he seems to suggest that Wendt might have been right in thinking that it did.

The 'Antioch source' theory is certainly attractive in the form in which Jeremias presents it. We are offered a reasonably objective and coherent story: 'The oldest missionary history of the Christian church'. This has been interpolated by the author of Acts with other material - the Acts of Philip and the Acts of Peter (including an account of the decisive Test Case of Cornelius), the Escape of Peter, and the Council of Jerusalem.

One important corollary remains: Jeremias regarded the 'Council visit' to Jerusalem (15;1-5) as a doublet of the 'famine relief' visit of 11;30. Thus he seeks to resolve the famous conflict of evidence between Acts and Galatians, and if the historicity of the Council as such is impaired, that of the Apostolic decree is defended, for on this view the 'first missionary journey' took place after the Council, and thus the address of

the apostolic decree (to Antioch, Syria and Cilicia) makes perfectly good sense, these being the areas in which the church was established at the time.

As evidence of the Antioch source Jeremias sees the use of the term *μαθηταί* to describe believers. The sudden appearance of the Hellenists at 6;1 is also taken to be an indication of a source, as well as the 'exactitude of the report' itself. Nevertheless, the arguments for the existence of this source are, as is inevitable, largely subjective, and depend rather more on isolating the insertions than on defining the source itself. Thus there is held to be a contradiction between the 'Acts of Philip' (8;5-40) and the statement that the scattered Hellenists preached only to Jews: for Philip preached to Samaritans and to an Ethiopian! The Damascus Road story, on the other hand, belongs to the Antioch source. For the *Saul who *ἐλυμαίνετο* in 8;3 is the same man who is still *ἐμπνέων ἀπαλῆς καὶ φόβου* at 9;1. And the Saul who is left at Tarsus at 9;30 is fetched back to Antioch by Barnabas at 11;26.

* We have discussed in chapter. 4. the interesting suggestion that the word *ἀπαλή* refers to the technical rabbinic term for a 'warning to wrongdoers'. Such a meaning hardly appears likely in this verse and certainly does not seem to be implied by Luke.

But the 'Acts of Peter' (9;31-11;18) have nothing to do with the Antioch source. They interrupt the story of the Hellenist diaspora:

(πάντες δὲ διασπάρσαν	8;1
οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες	8;4
οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες	11;19)

Neither have the incidents of Peter's escape and Herod's death anything to do with the Antioch source. They merely separate the arrival of Paul and Barnabas in Jerusalem at 11;30 from their return to Antioch at 12;25. Chronology also comes to our aid, for the famine occurred - according to Josephus - during the administration of Ptolemy and Tiberius Alexander. This gives us a date in the region of A.D.46-48, whereas Herod Agrippa had died in A.D.44. The 'Peter's escape' incident is out of place, and is therefore an insertion.

The fourth and last insertion is none other than the famous account of the Council of Jerusalem. The 'Council visit' is taken by Jeremias to be a doublet of the 'famine relief visit', and partly on chronological grounds.* Since Gallio was certainly proconsul of Achaia in A.D.51 or 52, and Paul was at Corinth during his administration (Acts 18;4) the Council must have taken^{place} at approximately the same time as the famine.

* Sabbathjahr und Neutestamentliche Chronologie: ZNW, 27, - 1928.

Moreover, it is hardly likely that the conservative Jewish Christians allowed suspected heresy to flourish unchecked at Antioch for five years (from 11;20 to 15;1) And since the same event is reported twice, of necessity the account in ch.15 must be the insertion, because the apostolic decree as reported refers only to Syria and Cilicia, and what is more, Paul is to learn about it once more at 21;25. The word ἀποστόλους in 15;2 refers to the Jerusalem leadership, and not as in the Antioch source generally, to Paul and Barnabas as well. Lastly, 15;33 sends Silas back to Jerusalem, while 15;40 sees him back in Antioch. The link verb in the Antioch source is δὲ ἐτῆρβον ; which occurs at 14; 28 and 15;35, while 16;4 (Paul and Silas promulgate the apostolic decree) is an editorial addition.

Jeremias left open the question of the continuation of the Antioch source, but was ready to speculate, with Wendt, that it continued on far into the latter half of the book. His reconstruction, supported as always by profound knowledge of Rabbinic custom and contemporary history, is attractive and persuasive. He considers that Luke has used the Antioch source in much the same way as he used Mark, keeping its order intact, but inserting other material of varying length. Moreover, it is extremely likely that he possessed the Antioch source in written form, and this historical record therefore forms the kernel of the Acts of the Apostles.

4) E. HAENCHEN: ATTEMPTED DEMOLITION OF THE ANTIOCH SOURCE:

A radically different approach to Acts and its sources has been taken by Prof. E. Haenchen.* He subjects the theory of the Antioch source to drastic criticism. He begins by observing that the driving force behind source criticism was the question: 'What actually happened? '**, and until the rise of form criticism the Biblical documents were wrongly handled. We know first of all that Mark could not be reconstructed out of Luke's gospel, and no sources can be identified in Acts on stylistic grounds. Moreover, the missionaries had no interest in recording their own activities: their business was to proclaim the Lord Jesus. There was no synoptic tradition about Paul! Moreover, the speeches in Acts are careful compositions by the author; here he was not bound, as in the gospel, to hand on the words of the Lord Jesus in definitive form. All of which does not of course prove the negative: that written sources existed.

But Haenchen seeks to open a 'credibility gap' in the Antioch source itself, and he starts with the

* Die Apostelgeschichte; (Meyer Kommentar) We refer to the 1965 edition.

** And why not? Particularly in the study of a book that purports to be an accurate $\delta\gamma\gamma\alpha\gamma\alpha$?

martyrdom of Stephen. According to 7:58 Saul was present at the stoning. But Paul himself never mentions the martyrdom of Stephen! Luke knew, as every Christian knew, that Paul had persecuted the church, and for him this could only mean the church in Jerusalem. The statement that Paul looked after the garments of the killers of Stephen has been added by Luke himself! Luke also jumped to the conclusion that Stephen's death - he was in fact the only victim - was followed by violent mass persecution. Having gone so far he further concluded that Paul acted as judge in mock trials and always voted for the death penalty.

Haenchen concludes: 'We see that Luke does not have here a continuous written source at his disposal (It is just the same in chapters 1 - 5). He seeks to make up for this lack by drawing conclusions and from making additions to the pieces of information which were already available. In this he is guided by definite suppositions about the course and the construction of early Christian history!'

Haenchen further criticises the theories of Wendt and Jeremias: What could have made the early Christians at Antioch want to chronicle their history anyway?

'The generation which thinks it is the last does not write for a coming one.' The most plausible explanation

* H. p.75.

has been that the Antiochene Christians wished to justify their position towards Jerusalem and the circumcision party. This however, will not do, for the Jerusalem church cared little about a far-off Gentile Christian community until the concrete issue of circumcision arose. Moreover it is incomprehensible that Luke could have taken the story of the 'Seven Deacons' from a written source. He has developed it in accordance with his own preconceived ideas in a way that would be unthinkable if the written evidence of an eyewitness lay before him! (Thus Stephen, commissioned as a social worker, turns out to be a militant evangelist: 6;10.)

Has Haenchen damaged the Antioch source beyond repair? It received fresh support in 1953 from R. Bultmann who was prepared to say 'I believe in ~~an~~ Antioch source.'* Bultmann objected that Haenchen's method was wrong: style criticism could be as one-sided as source criticism: Haenchen 'treats the question of written sources too lightly.'... 'When the unity of a composition is proved, nothing is decided about the possible use of sources.'

As a positive indication of written sources

* 'Ich glaube an eine Antiochenische Quelle:'...in New Testament Essays - ed. A.J.B.Higgins. p.79.

Bultmann pointed first of all to the lists of names: the record of the seven deacons, for example, could hardly have been handed down in purely oral form. Bultmann also emphasises the appearance of 'we' in the D text at 11;28. This could well be original - and he further conjectured that another 'we' originally stood at 13;2 ('While THEY were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said 'Set apart from me Barnabas and Saul...') Thus Bultmann concluded in favour of the Antioch source, which he thought was written in the 'we' style, as well as of the Itinerary for the latter part of the book.

Some further criticisms could be made of Haenchen's views: the suggestion that Luke was affected by pre-suppositions about early Christian history, might recoil upon its maker, and when we are told that Luke 'ventured upon a bold leap' in linking Paul with the death of Stephen, we may wonder whether the 'bold leap' is not being made by Haenchen himself. For the argument against Paul's presence at the stoning of Stephen is the dangerous one of silence! Whereas, and this was noted by Paley in his *Horae Paulinae* as well as by Harnack*, Paul mentions his work as a persecutor at Gal 1;13 - καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἑδίωκον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ - as well as

* AA p.271

at Phil 3;6 κατὰ βῆλος δώκων τὴν
ἐκκλησίαν and 1 Cor 15;9 οὐκ ἐπὶ ἰκανὸς
καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος, διότι ἐδίωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν

Is it more likely that Paul's presence at the death of Stephen was guesswork by Luke, or that it was something too appalling to be mentioned directly by the apostle? Who does not have some memories too embarrassing to be publicly mentioned? Paul may have found it as difficult to come to terms with the enigmatic figure of Stephen, as have scholars and critics ever since.

Thus one major objection to the Antioch source seems hardly decisive. But what of a further criticism - that comparison with the third gospel is invalid, and that nobody would have been interested in writing the 'earliest missionary history of the Christian church' because all were expecting the Lord's return at any moment? And what of the contention that there was no tradition of the words and deeds of the apostles to match those of Jesus?*

Here we enter the realm of the 'a priori', and one 'a priori' view is often much as good as another. It certainly seems 'a priori' to assume that there simply could not have been any church historian before

* 'Von einem blockweisen Nebeneinanderstellen der Quellen ist keine Rede.' (Haenchen p 73 footnote).

Luke, and that thoughts of an imminent return of the Lord prevented any attempt at a Christian chronicle. If Conzelmann is correct in holding that Luke frequently tones down the primitive futuristic eschatology of the early tradition*, could there not have been some Antiochene predecessor who had a similar idea? A compulsive diarist might exist even among enthusiasts for the Lord's return, and there might be among the adventists some spirit who retained a kindly interest in the present age as well as in the age to come.**

Yet this too is only a hypothesis, and it is

* See Luke's eschatology in Conzelmann, T.S.L. p95-136.

'The main motif in the recasting to which Luke subjects his source, proves to be the delay in the parousia, which leads to a comprehensive consideration of the nature and course of the last things. Whereas originally the imminence of the end was the most important factor, now other factors enter. The delay has to be explained, and this is done by means of the idea of God's plan which underlies the whole structure of Luke's account.' (p131-132).

Luke's source here is Mark.

** There is indeed a curious double interest to be found in the sayings of Jesus himself: solemn references to the End alternate with a very human interest in everyday living. This is the problem that Schweitzer's 'Interimsethik' attempted to solve.

certainly true that the Christian communities as we glimpse them in the New Testament were not wise according to the flesh. Analogies with other missionary situations might suggest that few would be interested in compiling a daily chronicle of events. All too often the oldest files at Church or mission headquarters turn out to be missing or eaten by termites. The memories of aged pioneers may be fallible and their persons inaccessible. That this was so in apostolic times can be deduced from Acts itself, in which, on any view of its historical reliability, the earlier chapters are much vaguer than the later ones. Thus Philip went down to 'a city of Samaria', and did mighty works (8;5). No detailed itinerary here! Again, the 'villages of the Samaritans', in which Philip preached are 'many' but nameless.(8;25)*

Since the development of form-criticism it has been the predominant view that no detailed and connected tradition about the apostles existed.

5) J. JERVELL

If Dibelius and his followers are right about this, then the theory of an Antioch source can hardly survive. A contrary view has been argued by Professor Jacob Jervell who selects 1923 and 1956 as decisive dates in

* See page 511. additional note 3.

the history of the study of Acts.* The former years saw the publication of the essay by Dibelius: 'Style criticism of the Book of Acts' and the latter witnessed the appearance of Haenchen's commentary. The effect of their work, says Prof Jervell, is to turn Lücke into 'a theologian with a pronounced profile.'... 'The Book of Acts is, by and large, to be attributed to Luke himself.' He had nothing to work with except 'a few miracle stories of the apostles and other pioneer Christian missionaries, like 3;1-10' (the healing at the Beautiful Gate): 'stories of isolated events...for example 6;8ff' (the preaching of Stephen) and in the second part of the book the travel document' (Reisebericht). The arguments of Dibelius and Haenchen are 'at first sight convincing, and enlightening, but they rest on nothing but probabilities.'

Jervell seeks to show 'a more excellent way' and to demonstrate that there was, after all, a tradition about the apostles in the early church. He begins with Romans 1;8 ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καταγγέλλεται ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ. The word καταγγέλλω belongs, says Jervell to 'the precise vocabulary of Paul's kerygma' (strong kerygmaterminologie) 'The very fact that a church is founded or exists is the subject-matter of proclamation.'

* Zus. Frage der Traditionen Grundlage der Apostelgeschichte: Studia Theologica XV - XVI, 1961 - 62

('Allein die Tatsache, dass eine Gemeinde entsteht oder besteht, ist Gegenstand der Verkündigung.')

Further statements of this kind are sought elsewhere in the Pauline letters: for example, the Thessalonians have become $\tau\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\nu\ \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu$ $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\ \mu\alpha\kappa\epsilon\delta\omicron\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\ \beta\alpha\chi\alpha\acute{\iota}\alpha$ (1 Thess 1:7). The apostles have no need to speak of the faith of the Thessalonians, for the news of that faith is itself proclamation; the key word is $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\varsigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ * $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \gamma\epsilon\rho\ldots$ $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\varsigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma\mu\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\omicron\delta\omicron\nu\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\ \pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$; and what is proclaimed is Jesus 'who saves us from the wrath to come' - a most un-Pauline summary which may well represent Paul's popular style of missionary preaching, and which resembles remarkably what we find in Acts.**

Jervell turns next to 2 Cor 3:1-3. The Corinthians are themselves Paul's letter of recommendation, read over by all men. In other words news of the foundation of the church has been widely spread, and furthermore Paul's testimonial turns out to be an $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\lambda\eta\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (v3).

* Jervell notes also that $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\varsigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ is a typically Lucan, not a Pauline word.

** Jervell quotes Dibelius on this passage: 'Bei der Missionisierung eines Ortes scheint er mehr gemeinchristliche Gedanken und Begriffe verwendet...als wir aus den vier Hauptbriefen vernehmen können.'

Tradition about the founding of the church is in itself part of the gospel message.

So too elsewhere in the letters: Epaphras is an example to the Colossians (Col;1-7) and Paul himself proudly claims to $\pi\epsilon\pi\lambda\eta\rho\omega\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\iota\ \tau\acute{o}\ \epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}\omega\upsilon$ ^(Rom 15:19). His missionary work from Jerusalem to Illyricum is itself part of the proclamation. Jervell concludes: 'Stories of the activities of the apostles and of the faith of the churches had their place in the life and even in the proclamation of the church, and it is important to notice that the decisive motives were not those of myth-making, or of historical biography: they were kerygmatic.'

Jervell proceeds to give other examples which, he claims, show that Paul had an interest in the history of his churches. Just as the Thessalonians are an example to others, so they must imitate the sufferings of the churches in Judaea, $\text{'}\sigma\tau\iota\ \tau\alpha\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\tau\epsilon\ldots\text{'}$
 $\text{'}\delta\iota\omega\ \tau\omega\ \nu\ \delta\acute{\iota}\omega\ \sigma\upsilon\mu\phi\omega\lambda\epsilon\tau\omega\text{'}$ (1 Thess2;14)

Likewise Corinth should follow, in financial matters, the godly example of Macedonia. (2 Cor 9;1) As for relations between the Aegean churches and Jerusalem, 'shades of the prison house' begin to close at Romans 15;31, where Paul asks for prayer that he may be delivered from the unbelievers and that his offering may be $\epsilon\upsilon\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma\delta\epsilon\kappa\tau\omega\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \lambda\gamma\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$. Paul presupposes that local churches do in fact know something about

each other's affairs.

Moreover, while he never mentions the primitive Jerusalem church directly, he presupposes knowledge of it in the Galatians - they know who 'Cephas' and the 'pillars' are, just as the churches in Judaea know that their former persecutor is now a Christian missionary. (Gal;2;24; to which we may add καὶ ἑδόξαζον ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸν θεόν - which implies that missionary history is worth remembering. Furthermore Paul claims to perform σημεῖα, τέρατα, and δυνάμεις

2Cor 12;12- τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου κατεργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ - σημείοις τε καὶ τέρασι καὶ δυνάμεσι .

'From this it is clear that the 'signs of an apostle' were a known and fixed quantity. The church knows of the signs which legitimate the work of the original apostles: those very signs of which the Acts of the Apostles make mention.'

Jervell thus concludes that it is wrong to suppose that there was no tradition about the earliest church. People were interested in stories of the deeds of men like Paul because such stories were of value in their missionary preaching. There is no decisive difference between the Third Gospel and Acts in this respect. Luke had a tradition at his disposal - but how did he make use of it? And how much, in fact, has Professor Jervell proved?

He has shown from the Pauline letters that details of the church life of one community could indeed be of interest to another, and that the scattered ἐκκλησίαι did feel themselves part of a common fellowship that transcended, however imperfectly, the fundamental division between Jew and Gentile. Thus - and here we remain as always in the realm of conjecture and opinion - there may have been more interest in 'church history' than Dibelius and Haenchen allowed. But if that interest was 'kerygmatic' then it would be church history of a particular kind. One would expect positive aspects of church life to be emphasised, with stress upon signs and wonders, blessings received, and great numbers added to the faith.* And it is all too easy for the zealous to delude themselves in such matters. Our problem is to think ourselves sympathetically into the position of the early Christians, living in a world without mass media of communication, and in which the postal services ran only for the benefit of the state. Analogies with the church behind the iron curtain, or in regions isolated by war, might be of some value. One would think that they might be hungry for news of their co-religionists elsewhere, that not only Paul rejoiced at the arrival of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, (1Cor 16 ;17) and that the Colossians (4;7-8) retained some memory of what Tychicus and Onesimus told them about Paul.

* See note at end of this chapter.

But what verdict does this lead us to pronounce upon the theory of an Antioch source? Any answer will depend on whether or not we think Luke had any lengthy written sources at his disposal when he wrote Acts. The source as reconstructed by Jeremias presents a connected, coherent and interesting narrative. If we can believe that Luke worked here as he did with his gospel, inserting material from other sources into his main narrative, then we must regard the Antioch source as the most likely explanation of the Book of Acts as we have it. We cannot rule out 'a priori' the idea that someone in the Antioch church played the part of a 'proto-Luke' and set down on papyrus the acts of God performed through Stephen, Paul, Barnabas and the unknown men of Cyprus and Cyrene. As Bultmann has concluded; 'The main question should be the relationship between the Itinerary (which underlies the narrative from ch.16 on) and the 'Antioch' source. It is not very probable that they both formed a literary unity. Rather we should suppose that Paul's companion or companions (there could have been several, one after the other) came from the Antioch church. The author, who was perhaps an Antiochene himself, may have been able to use both the Itinerary and the Antioch source from the archives of the church!*

* NT ESSAYS, ed A.J.B.Higgins p79.

Haenchen, however, is unimpressed, and seeks to discredit the 'Harnackian wishful thinking' (Harnaksche Wunschtraum) of an Antioch source by pointing to the Lucan characteristics of 11;19 ff: words like πολλὸς ἑρθμός, ἡγῆρ ἡγαθός, λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον, indicate that we are tracing here the creative hand of Luke himself. Harnack's exercise in wish-fulfilment being thus disposed of, Haenchen ventures on some conjectures of his own: among 'those who were scattered abroad' there were Cypriots, and the person who really started the Gentile mission was Barnabas, 'who acted as a missionary agent and not as a Jerusalem agent.' Barnabas never introduced the unwelcome Paul to the Jerusalem authorities at all, as is claimed at 9:27. Here once again Luke was the victim of his own pre-conceived ideas. He did not know about Paul's unsuccessful mission to Arabia and so wrongly supposed that he had gone up to Jerusalem. To this natural mistake he added the incorrect assumption that Barnabas played the role of mediator and introduced Paul to the Jerusalem leadership.*

* Haenchen p324,282. Harnack's 'wish-fulfilment' refers to the wish to find out what actually happened. Haenchen's use of the term 'In Wirklichkeit' shows that he is not immune to that wish himself! The tendency of his work is to play down coincidences between Acts and the Pauline epistles. Thus, over Paul's escape from Damascus in a basket, he stresses that in Acts 9:25 Paul is on the run from 'the Jews', but in 2Cor 11:32 from the Ethnarch of King Aretas. See chapter 4 of the present work, and Dupont's protest against this method. (Sources-pl57footnote)

Thus the existence of the Antioch source continues to be disputed, and much turns on the question: did extended written sources exist or not? If they did, then the Antioch source, with characteristics outlined by Jeremias, remains as probable a theory as any. It has received some recent support from an unexpected quarter. M. Wilcox's study 'The Semitisms of Acts' concludes that 'It happens that the parts of Luke-Acts in which we may have the greatest confidence in postulating sources are found in that section which Harnack on quite different grounds assigned to his 'Antioch' source...this means that the strongest cases appear in those sections which are or appear to be closely connected with Antioch.' These include the story of Paul and Bar-Jesus at Paphos, and of Paul at Pisidian Antioch*, both of which occur in the course of the missionary journey which is represented as sponsored by the church at Antioch in Syria (Acts 13;1-3) reporting back later at the close of the journey. (Acts 15:25ff)...From the so-called 'kerygmatic' or 'credal' elements in the speeches, we have found a number of elements of tradition shared with Ignatius of Antioch or Polycarp of Smyrna...and Luke-Acts... The church of Antioch...began...with a Gentile element from the outset...It is this originally happy and

* See Chapter 9.

* See page 512 Additional note 4.

missionary-minded church whose peace is disturbed by the Judaizing element from Judaea (Acts 15;1)...It may well be said that this defence of the Gentile mission and of the resultant breach with Judaism is - if not the purpose of Acts - at least one of the major reasons for its composition. That is, it seems arguable that this Antiochene section is one of the really key sections in Acts...On the other hand, from the large amount of Lukan style and vocabulary found throughout it may be seen that even if Luke did have some kind of material at his disposal, he has not - apart from certain exceptions - been content to leave it untouched. This fact, of course, may only serve to throw into greater relief those passages where he has not made alterations, and heighten their value as marks of the original and authentic tradition transmitted...the well-known tradition connecting Luke with Antioch, traceable to Eusebius at least, certainly does not seem to weigh against the view outlined above, although we must be careful not to attach too much weight to it.*

This study by Wilcox has certainly given new life to the idea of an Antioch source. If over-confidence in the dissection of sources led to a reaction in which the idea of continuous sources was largely discredited, then it could be time for a further 'swing of

* Wilcox p.179.

the critical pendulum'. The fact that Luke has covered his tracks, so that we cannot precisely identify his sources, does not imply that he never had any. Some weight must be given to the preponderance of Semitisms in Acts 1 - 15: this surely indicates use of Semitic source material of some kind. Again, the literary interest shown in Antioch (see 6:5, 11:26, 13:1) gives grounds for thinking that the author of his sources (or both) had a special interest in that city. On the other hand the list of Semitisms compiled by Wilcox (see p17) does not seem to support the precise reconstructions of the Antioch source either according to Harnack or according to Jeremias. One may conclude with confidence that Luke made use of traditions deriving from Antioch, and, less certainly, that he employed a written narrative composed to serve as an apology for the missionary policies of that church. The circumcision controversy must have led to the production of other pamphlets beside Galatians, for, to quote Prof. O. Chadwick, 'Controversial divinity is still divinity, and preferable to a dumb and vegetative ignorance.' If Luke was the first to rethink the problem of eschatology, as Conzelmann suggests, he was certainly not the first to defend the legitimacy of

the Gentile mission.*

NOTE

Kerygmatic History in the 'Brotherly Herald'

The following quotation from the Brotherly Herald, (Bratskiy vestnik), published by the All Union Congress of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the USSR, may be of interest to students of Acts:

Jan.1961."From the report of K.S.Veliseichuk, Senior Presbyter of the AUECB in Belorussia.

In Slutsk commune there took place the retirement of Brother R.N.Bykovsky at his own request, on account of his advanced age. Brother Bykovsky had fulfilled his duties with much blessing. The new elder, elected unanimously, is also beloved: the kind and modest Brother P.E.Shelkun. Peace and order reigns in the church. Most of the believers work in the collective farms and live culturally and prosperously.

In Berezinsky Commune, which I visited in August, election of the church leadership took place in fraternal peace and love. Brothers were enrolled in the

* Chadwick's reference (Pelican History of the Church, Vol.3,p 303) is to the controversy between the Protestant Centuriators of Magdeburg and the Roman Catholic Bollandists. Their rival account of Christian origins, if mutually one-sided, helped in the growth of genuine historical knowledge.

leadership of the church who warmly love their task and work industriously in the collective farms and factories....'

Here we have facts of church life reported in a highly 'edifying ' style, but presumably nonetheless facts for that. The style is presumably 'language of Canaan' and to some extent based on Acts. The real and independent parallel is in the apologetic note: the reader must understand that believers in general and their leaders in particular are not social parasites but work industriously in collective farms. Since 1961 the believers in the Soviet Union have been most painfully confronted by the moral dilemmas implicit in the distinction between 'religio licita' and 'religio illicita'. Luke in his generation faced it too.

CHAPTER 9

'ABOUT WHOM IS THE PROPHET SAYING THIS?'

THE SPEECHES IN ACTS

Consideration of the speeches in Acts may begin with a well known anecdote about Dr. Johnson. Discussion was in progress about the reporting of parliamentary debates, when Johnson remarked: 'That speech I wrote in a garrett in Exeter Street. I have never been in the gallery of the House of Commons but once. Cave had interest with the doorkeepers. He, and the persons employed by him, gained admittance: they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the sides they took and the order in which they spoke, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate....I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the parliamentary debates'.*

On this historic piece of ghost-writing Boswell commented: 'As soon as he found that the speeches were thought genuine, he wrote no more of them: 'for he would not be accessory to the propagation of falsehood'. And such was the tenderness of his conscience that shortly before his death he expressed his regret for having been the author of fictions, which had passed for realities.'

* These were the debates in which Johnson 'took good care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it.'
J. Boswell: Life of Johnson, ed. G. Birkbeck Hill, Vol. 1, p. 504-5.

The regrets that the scrupulous Johnson expressed were a sign that in his own lifetime conventions about speech reporting were changing.* In historical writing nowadays it is no longer permissible to attribute to historical figures, words which they did not actually speak. The tape recorder and the television camera have brought new possibilities of accuracy which were impossible in ancient times, as well as new opportunities for 'slanting' and misrepresentation.

The claim 'I was misquoted' could have little meaning in the ancient world, at least outside the world of senators and kings, and there can be no doubt that speeches served purposes in ancient history books which would not be tolerable today. Reference is often made to the famous dictum of Thucydides: 'As to the speeches that were made by different men, either when they were about to begin the war or were already engaged therein, it has been difficult to recall with strict accuracy the words actually spoken, both for me as regards that which I myself heard, and for those who from various other sources have brought me reports. Therefore the speeches are given in the language in which, as it seemed to me, the several speakers would express, on the subject under consideration, the sentiments most befitting the occasion, though at the same time I have

* See Additional note. number 5. pages 513, 514, 515.

adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said'.*

On this H.J. Cadbury commented: 'It is evident that ancient writers considered the speeches more as editorial and dramatic comment than as historical tradition.' Yet the problem of the speeches in Acts remains: granted that they are compositions by the author in the form in which we have them, do they convey anything of the actual teaching of Peter, Paul and Stephen, or simply reflect the author's own ideas? Can we detect traditional source material in them or are they simply free compositions of the author? If the former is true, we may be able to deduce something from them about the theology of the earliest church. If the latter, then that theology may remain perhaps for ever within the veil of time past.

*History of the Peloponnesian War:1;22. It is worth noting that Thucydides makes a distinction between speech and event: '(As to the facts τὰ δ' ἔργα τῶν πραγμάτων)...I have thought it my duty to give them..only after investigating with the greatest possible accuracy each detail.' He also defends 'the absence of the fabulous' in his narrative (καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἰσῶς τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες εὐτελὲς ἀπρόσωπον φανῆται).
R.C.Jebb, in Hellenica, (1898) was prepared to find a good deal of the historical Pericles in the speeches as Thucydides records them (Hellenica, ed.E. Abbott, 258-261)

Verbatim reports? It may seem unlikely that speeches in Acts could be word for word records of what was actually said, but such notes were in fact made of the teachings of a near-contemporary of Paul and Jesus.

The philosopher Epictetus, a former slave of one of Nero's freedmen, was held in such high regard that his lectures were recorded verbatim: indeed Arrian his editor was at pains to disclaim any credit for himself: to Lucius Gellius he wrote: 'I have not composed these Words of Epictetus as one might be said to 'compose' books of this kind, nor have I of my own act published them to the world; indeed I acknowledge that I have not composed them at all. But whatever I heard him say I used to write down, word for word, as best I could, endeavouring to preserve it as a memorial, for my own future use, of his way of thinking and the frankness of his speech.'*

'There can be no doubt' - wrote W.D.Oldfather - 'that Arrian's report is a stenographic record of the

* ὅσα δὲ ἤκουον αὐτοῦ λέγοντος, ταῦτα αὐτὰ
ἐπεγράσθην αὐτοῖς ὀνόμασιν ὡς οἶον τε
ἦν γράψας ὑπομνήματα εἰς ἑωφθα
ἐμαυτῷ διαφυλάσσει τῆς ἐκείνου
διανοίας καὶ παρηγοίας.

Like Paul,

his contemporary, Epictetus was distinguished for his παρηγορία
(Epictetus ed. W.A.Oldfather Loeb ed. vol 1:p5)

ipsissima verba of the master...His own compositions are in Attic , while these works are in the koine... we have accordingly in Arrian's discourses a work which ..is really unique in literature, the actual words of an extraordinary gifted teacher upon scores, not to say hundreds of occasions in his own classroom.'

It is very unlikely that the speeches in Acts could be verbatim reports in this sense. Firstly, the author, unlike Arrian, makes no such claim in his preface. Secondly the circumstances of mission work would make the detailed preservation of sermon or lecture notes highly unlikely. Who translated for Paul and Barnabas in Lycaonia? (Acts 14:15-17) Obviously we are not to suppose that they both spoke simultaneously, and equally obviously the author intends to give their general meaning rather than their precise words. Moreover, to judge from the history of missions elsewhere, notes from the earliest days would have little chance of surviving. Time, damp and insects soon take their toll.

Nevertheless, records of speeches might be preserved if there was some special motive for doing so; some might wish to 'set the record straight' for posterity, as with the Res Gestae of Augustus. Others might wish to vindicate their own orthodoxy or reject misrepresentation. 'Why not indeed do evil that good may come? - as some libellously report me as saying.' Paul's protest in Romans 3:8 shows a desire to 'put the record straight;

lastly, the teaching of great figures like Stephen, Peter and Paul might be preserved in order to assist in teaching and in pastoral work. It is likely that Luke was restricted in his speeches, as elsewhere in his use of sources by the unevenness of the material which he was able to obtain. Thus Paul's farewell speech at Miletus seems to contain more verbal echoes of the language of Paul's letters than do his sermon at Athens and Pisidian Antioch: it has been thought that here, if nowhere else, we catch an echo of the *ipsissima verba Pauli*.^{*} Thus each of the speeches must be considered on its merits, but they give the general impression that they cannot reasonably be regarded as verbatim reports of what the speakers originally said.

RHETORICAL EXERCISES?

On the other hand the speeches in Acts certainly escape the censure of Diodorus Siculus who wrote: 'Authors who insert long-winded set speeches in historical works, or

* '2 Tim 4: 1-8 as a whole is reminiscent of the Pauline farewell in Acts 20:17ff, and the reference to presbyter-episcopi in the Pastorals generally is like Acts 20, but of course it might be said that this is only because both passages are Pauline, not because both are Lucan.'

C.E.D.Moule: The Birth of the New Testament p 220.

who introduce perpetual declamations, are deserving of censure....Some writers have carried the insertion of declamatory passages to such lengths that they have made the whole history a mere appendage to the speeches ...Consequently the readers of such works either skip the declamations, however masterly they may be considered to be, or else their spirit is so utterly broken by the writer's prolixity and irrelevance that they abandon the attempt to read him altogether!*

This heart-cry from the ancient world might perhaps refer nowadays to lengthy footnotes or technical jargon rather than to set speeches, for there are few greater differences between ancient and modern taste than over the question of rhetoric: the ancients enjoyed declamatory public speaking and valued it as an art: Diodorus himself was anxious to make clear that he had no objection to it in principle: 'Whenever the situation demands a diplomatic note verbale, a parliamentary oration, and so on, the historian who has not the courage to descend into the rhetorical arena is equally open to criticism. There are indeed a considerable number of occasions which will be found to render a resort to declamation essential. Full, able and pointed speeches may have been delivered as a historical fact...or again, the subject matter may possess such brilliance that the

* Diodorus: Bk.29:1.

words spoken cannot be allowed to appear inadequate to the actions performed*. Sometimes, again, a denouement may be so surprising that we may find ourselves compelled to employ speeches...in order to offer a solution to the puzzle.'**

As to date and literary ability Diodorus Siculus stands nearer to Luke than to Thucydides. Polybius was also against the inclusion of unlikely speeches: 'The Romans did not assuredly hold a debate on the question of the war, as some authors allege, even setting down the speeches made on both sides - a most absurd proceeding!' Polybius also dealt sternly with the failings of his fellow-professionals. 'When once one or two misstatements have been detected in an historical work, and these misstatements have been made deliberately, it is evident that no further reliance or confidence can be placed in the assertions of such a writer. The fact that Timaeus has falsified, and deliberately falsified, the speeches included in his works, can hardly have escaped his readers; instead

* A point relevant to Luke's reporting of Paul's speeches before Felix, Festus and Agrippa. 'This thing was not done in a corner'. If Luke has portrayed an eloquent Paul his motive need not be a theological one.

** Toynbee: Greek Historical Thought p.218.

of reproducing the speeches in their actual form, he determines what ought to have been said and then proceeds to detail what purport to be the speeches...'*

Clearly the speeches of Acts are not rhetorical firework displays, which may imply that the book was not intended for public recitation. H.J.Cadbury's verdict was favourable, : 'In brevity, variety, appropriateness and force they compare favourably with the similar productions of contemporary writers, such as the interminable harangues of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, or the ill-placed moralisings and vapid Biblical paraphrases of Josephus, or the monotonous monologues of the gospel of John.'**

WORDS OF THE WISE?

One other possibility remains to be considered: are we here dealing with a tradition of sayings of wise and learned men, such as we find in Rabbinic Judaism, and (it would seem) in the synoptic tradition of the words of Jesus?

A classic example of such a tradition is the Jewish work 'Ethics of the Fathers' (Pirke Aboth.) A tradition is traced from Moses to the men of the 'great Synagogue' who 'said three things: Be deliberate in judgement, raise up many disciples and make a fence around the Law'. All three concerns are manifested in the Ethics of the

* Polybius XXXVI ch.1. quoted by Toynbee, Greek Historical Thought p.215.

** Beg. v p.403.

Fathers: 'Hillel said ' a brutish man reads not sin, and an ignorant man cannot be saintly,'* while R. Tarfon declared that 'The day is short and the task is great and the labourers are idle and the wage is abundant and the master of the house is urgent..It is not thy part to finish the task, yet thou art not free to desist from it. If thou hast studied much in the law much reward will be given thee.' (Aboth 2:7 and 15). Clearly the obita dicta of the sages were valued for their own sake and for their importance in interpreting the law which was the giver of life.

Attempts have been made to compare and contrast the synoptic tradition of the words of Jesus with the Jewish tradition as represented in Aboth. Some have argued that Christian believers had sayings of their master by heart, as was done in Rabbinic and Koranic schools.** Others again have argued that they felt themselves in fellowship with a living Lord, and looked upward as well as backward, so that the inspired utterance of a prophet might be injected into the tradition and win acceptance as a word of the historical Jesus. This means in human terms that we may expect more 'ben trovato' sayings of Jesus than aphorisms of Hillel.

* That is an ענין חסיד cannot be חסיד. Jesus thought differently.

** e.g. B.Gerhardsson:Memory and Manuscript.

But this much is clear on either view: there was a sayings-tradition of Jesus , and Luke used it in his gospel, and it differed quite notably from his treatment of the speeches in Acts.

Thus we draw a different conclusion from Morton S.Enslin who has written: 'The results of synoptic criticism on Luke has made all too clear Luke's readiness to modify or transform his sources...he must be seen as an author who, while utilising sources stood in no awe of them but felt perfectly free to modify and change them...Luke has not scrupled to rewrite Mark and Matthew.'* Our own impression of the results of the synoptic criticism is the opposite: in dealing with the sayings of Jesus, Luke felt bound for the sake of reverence to hand them on much as he received them. Changes of vocabulary there might be, but he hesitated to rewrite his master.

This point was well dealt with by W.L.Knox, who indeed discounted Luke's claim to be a historian. 'He is simply a compiler, who had at his disposal a peculiarly Semitic infancy story, Mark Q, a large block of material peculiar to himself, some additional material about the passion from another source than Mark (or invented by himself) a narrative of the resurrection experiences, a story of the church in

* ZNW Vol 61 Section 3-4 p255.

Jerusalem from a very Semitic source, an account of St. Paul's missionary activities written on the whole in much better Greek, and his own travel diary, conflated with the Pauline story at the appropriate points. Like many other ancient writers he is mainly concerned with the amalgamation of pre-existing materials!*

Only one public statement attributed to Jesus in Luke's gospel, looks like a speech from Acts: this is the 'keynote speech' of 4:1-28. Here Luke would seem to have taken over the Marcan story of the rejection in Nazareth (Mk 6:1-8), placed it at the beginning of his account of the Lord's ministry, and developed it as a theme-study of one of his major interests: the transfer of the good news from Israel to the Gentiles: thus the provocative statement of Mk 4:27 'there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elijah, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian' is complemented by the final doom pronounced by Paul at Acts 28:28. 'This salvation of God has

* W.L.Knox Some Hellenistic Elements. p.58. It will be noted that this remark begs the literary question: what kind of an amalgamation did the author produce? Shakespeare's Hamlet is an amalgamation of existing materials, and Luke, if no Shakespeare, was more than a scissors - and - paste man. See E.Norden:Antike Kunstprosa: p.482 - 493.

been sent to the Gentiles: they will listen'.*

This 'keynote speech' apart, it would seem that Luke is concerned to hand on a reliable tradition of the teaching of Jesus; 'In the first book of Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began both to do and to teach'(Acts 1:1): the whole basis of synoptic studies is, after all, that the first three gospels offer much material that is verbally

* Are the references to Elijah and Elisha words of Jesus or Lucan composition? The parallelism is Semitic, and Wellhausen thought he could detect an Aramaic source at 4:26: the word 'widow' - Aramaic 'armelah' - was a misreading of the word 'Arami' - that is Aramaean or 'heathen'. This speculation is dismissed by Creed (Luke p69) on the grounds that the text as it stands recalls 1 Chron 27:9. On the other hand the thought closely resembles that which is so pessimistically uttered in the 'woes on the cities of Galilee' (Matt 11:20-24 and Luke 10:13-15) Thus it is not likely that Luke composed these sayings but as to their present context, Creed is right when he comments; 'The implied analogy between the inhabitants of Capernaum, the heathen widow of Sarepta and Naaman is too remote to be original.' (Creed p66)

almost identical.*

Clearly Luke allowed himself a freer hand in

* Some of Luke's motives in editing the words of Jesus may be distinguished:

a) reverence: he omits the hard saying 'Who are my mothers and my brethren'. (Mk 3:33=Lk 8:20-21)

b) urban mentality: The mustard seed is sowed in a garden (κῆπος) Lk.13:19 and not in the earth (Mk 4:31) or in the field (Matt 13:31) On this see Cadbury:MLA p.249.

c) artistic desire for realism: It is Luke only who portrays Legion, the Gadarene demoniac, 'sitting at the feet of Jesus' - no doubt because he saw it thus in his mind's eye as he wrote.

d) Theological presuppositions: Thus in the parable of the wicked husbandman, the master left his vineyard 'for a long while' (χρόνους ἱκανούς). This seems to indicate a deferred eschatology.

e) Desire for intelligibility; Jesus went to Capernaum 'a city of Galilee' (Lk 1:31.) Again, John the Baptist is not Elijah, but will 'go before....in the spirit and power of Elijah' (1:17) This could be an example of (d) theological interest as well.

f) Attempts at stylistic improvement. These are noted by W.L.Knox, p.8. 'He has made a truly gallant attempt to get rid of the barbaric word 'Amen' in the sense of 'truly': Matthew has it 30 times, which Luke has reduced to seven.

Acts than he did in the gospel. His primary purpose in Acts was not simply to record precisely all that Peter and Paul began both to do and to teach. He did not cherish their words of wisdom as Jewish ^{writers} cherished those of Hillel or Judah the Prince. To what extent, then, did he put his own words into their mouths? Did he record what they specifically said, or what they thought and usually said, or simply what he supposed they might have said?

The principal speakers in Acts are as follows: Peter (8 speeches), James (2), Stephen (1), Paul (9), and among non-Christians Gamaliel (5:35-39), the town clerk at Ephesus (19:35-40), the lawyer Tertullus (24:2-8) and Festus (his remarks to Agrippa:25:14-21 and 24-27)*

Now we know little of the views of any of these people except Paul, whose letters put us in direct touch with his life and thought. We know nothing of Stephen's ideas except what is attributed to him in Acts.** The views expressed by Gamaliel, the Town Clerk, Tertullus and Festus are, with the possible exception of the first-named, so short as to make enquiry pointless.***

* Beg. V.p 403

**And his message and martyrdom are discussed separately in ch.5.

*** Gamaliel, according to Bruce(pl46)is GamalielI, whom even Jewish tradition confuses with his grandson, GamalielII.

Both Peter and James have letters attributed to them in the New Testament. It is unfortunate, however, that the authenticity of these documents is in dispute. Many deny that the letter of James was written by the Lord's brother - indeed it does not claim as much - though its account of faith and works (James 2:14-26), if compared with that given by Paul in Romans 4, reads like a classic example of two serious men arguing from different premises. Few would attribute the second letter of Peter to the Big Fisherman, for it was disputed even in the ancient world: and as for 1 Peter, while some treat it as a baptismal liturgy, others date it in the reign of Domitian, while others again continue to maintain that it was written on the eve of the killing times under Nero, by the great apostle, who had Silvanus to help him with his Greek.

It is obvious then that we are almost totally dependent on Acts for our knowledge of Peter, James and Stephen, and that much will depend on whether we decide that their speeches convey any reliable information about their views. As so often in New Testament and in ancient studies generally, we find ourselves in a baffling 'so near and yet so far' position. Is Peter's Pentecost address an expression of the ideas of Peter in A.D.35 or of Luke in A.D.90? The only reliable full-scale report we have is that of Acts, and with what can we compare it? Moreover, Luke's

concerns were not ours. He allows the man whom many believe was the first Pope to slip out of his story at 12:28, to make a final decisive appearance in ch. 15.*

In chapter 3 we have attempted some comparison of the relative reliability of Acts and Jewish

* At 12:17 Peter went 'to another place' (ἐν ἑτέρῳ τόπῳ), This abrupt departure is, according to Harnack, the sign of Luke's employment of a source which broke off at this point. On the other hand S.G.F.Brandon believes that Luke deliberately suppressed the name of the 'other place'. It was Alexandria, the home of unsound christology, as is evidenced by the Apollos incident in 18:24-26, where the Alexandrian missionary is put right by Aquilla and Priscilla. 'Obviously' writes Brandon, 'nothing like demonstration can be expected in such a matter as this', but wonders 'whether Luke's vagueness here is merely due to unconcern about literary completeness in his narrative or is the result of an intention to suppress some fact which he regarded as inconvenient to his purpose.' (The Fall of Jerusalem:p 210-212) What of a third possibility - genuine ignorance? The author did not know, just as he did not know the name of the village of Mary and Martha (Lk.10:38).

It may be noted once more that the very solid angel who 'struck Peter in the side'(12:7)is quite un-Lucan and strong evidence for a source.

missionary literature. Turning now to the speeches of Paul we find that the first - to the Jews at Iystra, concludes with a rough and ready summary of the doctrine of justification by faith ('by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the Law of Moses' 13:39). It could pass as an attempt to present Paul's views by a not profoundly theological writer: equally the address at Miletus, with its sombre personal forebodings, seems to be the speech most closely linked with the Pauline letters. Here, if anywhere we hear the echo of the personal voice of the apostle to the Gentiles.*

A reasonable working hypothesis would seem to be that of W.L.Knox: 'The speeches suggest that we have occasional reminiscences of genuine Pauline utterances, worked into free compositions of the sort of thing which Luke regarded as appropriate to the occasion. These compositions may of course include reminiscences of speeches heard on other occasions, but it is more probable that the greater part is Luke's own composition, which is, on the whole, remarkably successful.'**

This tentative judgement applies to the speeches by Paul: can we go any further and win any certainty about those attributed to Peter?

* See additional note number 6. pages 516, 517, 518.

** Knox: Some Hellenistic elements:p29.

PETER'S SPEECHES

Following Cadbury (Beg.V.Note XXXII p.402ff) we list the speeches of Peter as follows:

- 1) To the other disciples on the choice of a twelfth man to replace Judas. (1:16-22)
- 2) To the multitude at Pentecost (2:14-36)
- 3) To the multitude at Solomon's porch (3:12-36)
- 4) To the Sanhedrin (5:8-12)
- 5) With the apostles to the Sanhedrin again.(5:29b-32)
- 6) To Cornelius and others. (10:36-43)
- 7) To the church authorities at Jerusalem (11:5-17)
- 8) To the Council at Jerusalem. (15:7-11)

Clearly Peter's speeches are of immense importance in the first part of Acts, and that they constitute our major source of information about the first of the disciples.*

Clearly too the Peter of Acts is a somewhat larger than life figure. We are dealing here with a tradition that is at least partly saga. As Auerbach has written:** 'Even where the saga form does not betray itself at once through such things as elements of the miraculous, the repetition of familiar motives, and the omission of details of time and place, it may usually be quickly recognised from its construction. The saga form moves

* See pages 518,519. Additional note number 7.

**See pages 519,520,521. Additional note number 8.

with extreme smoothness...it arranges its material unambiguously, cutting it loose from the world at large, so that the latter cannot break in to cause confusion. It knows only characters who are unambiguously determined, and controlled by a few simple motives: in the unbroken firmness of their feeling and action they cannot be called in question...'Luke certainly tries to relate his material to the world at large by such devices as lists of names (1:13,4:5,6:5), and his account of Christian beginnings in the early part of Acts seems to be on the borderline between saga and history. His source material - as perhaps in his gospel - reached him in saga form, but he tries to deal with it as an historian.

The Peter of Acts appears as a figure of heroic simplification. There is no sign of his mother-in-law, mentioned in Mk.1:30 (and by Luke himself in the gospel-4:38). Nor do we meet Peter's wife, who seems to be referred to by Paul at 1 Cor.9:5, when he asked why he also should not be allowed to *ἔσθ' ἡμεῖς γυναῖκα περιάγειν*. On the other hand what looks like local colour appears in the story of Peter's escape at 12:1-17, where Rhoda the maidservant is too overjoyed to open the door. Thus might a second-generation Methodist record the exploits of Wesley without finding it necessary to say much about his unfortunate marriage to Mrs. Vazeille.

Again, Peter does most of the talking in the early

chapters of Acts. John, who accompanies him at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple is a mere shadow (3:4): he may even be an editorial addition! We have no means of knowing what were the distinctive theological emphases of James the Son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, or Matthias: views put forward by Peter in his speeches may be as much theirs as his. The Peter of Acts is one who 'in the unbroken firmness of...feeling and action ...cannot be called in question.'

Yet the heroic stature of Peter, in Luke's account, shows the importance which the author attached to him. Peter's speeches play such a large part in the early chapters that the author clearly regarded them as highly important. Has he recorded anything of the genuine thought of Peter and the church from which he came?

It has long been a commonplace that the speeches of Peter are rather stereotyped in form. Certain key ideas reappear in each of them. Noting this, Cadbury wrote that 'The speeches...share with each other some elements of likeness that go beyond mere style and vocabulary into the subject matter itself. This again argues their common origin in the mind of the editor.'*

Cadbury's argument might be thought at first glance a 'non-sequitur'. Why should not the similarity in subject matter derive not from the mind of the

* Beg V p 407.

editor but from that of Peter or Stephen? This was how in fact they told the 'old old story' - at that date sensationally new. As Paul says, 'Whether it was I or they, thus we preached and thus you believed.' (1 Cor 15:11)

However, Cadbury argues, firstly that different speakers use the same proof texts: 'Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades' - a quotation from psalm 16 - is used by Peter in Jerusalem and by Paul at Pisidian Antioch.* This too is obviously not decisive, so Cadbury points out that the speeches are interdependent. On the use of O.T. proof texts he writes: 'The logical steps may be listed thus:

- A. Scripture says thus and so.
- B. This must apply to the speaker or to another.
- C. It can be proved not to apply to the speaker.
- D. Therefore since it was fulfilled in Jesus, it may be applied to him. Nowhere in Acts are all four steps given in a single passage, but the scheme is clear. That the author of Acts gives in one passage steps which he omits in another confirms our impression that the

* Acts 2:27 and 13:35.

the Athenian speech...The general parallelism becomes clearer than ever.'

Cadbury came to a negative conclusion: 'Even though devoid of historical basis in genuine tradition the speeches have nevertheless considerable theological value. They attest the simple theological outlook conceived to have been original by at least one Christian in the obscure period at which Acts was written.'*

Much of Cadbury's argument is clearly correct. Everything was against the precise reproduction of speeches - even the inadequacy of ancient punctuation.** But was the 'simple theological outlook' entirely that of Luke himself, or did he succeed in recording anything of the thoughts and message of the apostles?

One clue that has been eagerly followed up is that of Semitic sources. Luke's Greek is clearly extremely Semitic at times. He moves from the balanced clauses of his preface (Lk.1:1-4) to the Hebrew story-teller's style of the infancy narrative. Does this indicate the use of a Semitic source, or is it the self-conscious effort of a literary artist, or does it simply reflect the Biblical idiom of the early church, which was as influenced by the Greek Old Testament as was John Bunyan

* Beg V p. 427.

** Which makes it hard to indicate where a speech precisely begins and ends - a notable problem in the fourth gospel.

by the King James version?*

The hunt for Semitisms in Acts has been long and arduous. The 'classic statement of the Aramaic documentary theory...was the work of C.C.Torrey of Yale'** who argued that Acts 1-15 was in fact a translation of a single Aramaic source. This Torrey referred to as 'I Acts' while in 'II Acts' (chs.16-28) Luke composed freely in his own style.***

Three of Torrey's alleged outcrops of Semitism have been accepted as probable by many scholars: Wilcox lists them**** as $\epsilon\pi\iota\tau\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in Acts 2:47, and the obscure passages 3:16 and 4:25. It will be noted that the first of these occurs in a summary, the second in a speech by Peter and the third in the Church's prayer of thanksgiving after the apostles' release.

* Knox says that the vocabulary of the early church was 'often vilely Semitic' (Some Hellenistic elements p8) Vile no doubt to the Atticist, but we must beware of such value judgements in linguistic matters. It seems that W.L.Knox lays too much stress on Luke's stylistic incompetence. The difference between the Prologue and the Infancy narrative, however accounted for, shows that he had some idea of style.

** So says M.Wilcox: The Semitisms of Acts, p6, on whose work we depend for much of this section.

*** C.C.Torrey: The Composition and date of Acts. (1916)

**** Wilcox p8.

Torrey listed these three points as 'especially striking examples of Semitism' 2:47 reads ὁ δὲ κύριος προσετίθει τοὺς σωζομένους καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό. The meaning of this—especially the last three words—is far from clear: as early as the time when Codex D was copied, it was glossed by the reading ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. In the IXX the phrase represents the Hebrew בְּיָמָיו , בְּיָמָיו meaning 'together', while the Aramaic equivalent is בְּיָמָיו : this also means 'together', but, concludes Torrey triumphantly and in italics, 'In the Judaeen dialects of Aramaic the usual meaning of בְּיָמָיו is 'greatly', 'exceedingly', and this is precisely what is needed in the place of ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό in Acts 2:47. 'Luke mistranslated because he was unfamiliar with the Judaeen dialect of Aramaic.

Secondly there is the very obscure sentence in Peter's speech at 3:16. καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ τοῦτον ὃν θεωρεῖτε καὶ οἶδατε ἑστερέωσε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ τὴν δόκλῃαν ταύτην ἀπέναντι πάντων ὁμῶν.

This seems to imply that the name of Jesus itself performed a miracle(τοῦτον ἑστερέωσε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ)Torrey,

however, attempts a literal retranslation back into Aramaic and seeks to explain the confusion by means of a 'jot': the original was בְּיָמָיו (from the

root $\sqrt{\Pi' \psi}$) and it was misread as $\Pi' \psi \Pi' \psi$:
'the name has strengthened him'. The letter 'sin' (ψ)
was confused with 'shin' (ψ).

Torrey's third likely example of mistranslated Aramaic occurs at 4:24 where the community of believers prays: 'ΔΕΣΠΟΤΑ - ὁ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν διὰ
Πνεύματος Ἁγίου στόματος Δαβὶδ παῖδες σου εἰπὼν

The words underlined really make no sense at all, and Torrey argues that in the absence of textual variants there is no justification for amending or deleting them. This time he claims that there was misreading, not of a 'jot', but a 'tittle': the word וְהָיָה was mistaken for וְהָיָה. 'The source of the confusion lay in a relative clause beginning וְהָיָה כִּי יֵלֵךְ אֲבִינוּ ('that which our father') which was misread as וְהָיָה כִּי יֵלֵךְ אֲבִינוּ - the scarcely meaningful' וְהָיָה כִּי יֵלֵךְ אֲבִינוּ. 'As soon as the ו of וְהָיָה was lengthened into וְ (perhaps the most common of all accidents in Hebrew-Aramaic manuscripts)...the whole passage was ruined.'

Has Torrey made out a case for Aramaic sources behind all or part of Acts 1-15? If so, does this allow us to draw any conclusions about the faith and life of the earliest church? Here the amateur student of Aramaic must defer to the professionals. Powerful criticisms of Torrey's theories are made by Wilcox,**who argues

* "Torrey p.17-18.

** Wilcox p.9.

that many of the Torrey's alleged mistranslations are open to question: he is proceeding from the unknown to the still more unknown. Moreover Semitisms are found elsewhere, 'namely in Paul's letters, or Hermas. 'His observation of this fact led Cadbury to ask whether it would not have been possible for a Christian or a Hellenistic Jew to write a narrative 'as Semitic as that of Luke' without being a translator. Again H.F.D. Sparks* noted that 'the Semitisms of Acts could well be 'Septuagintalisms' - the expression of a mind grounded in the Greek Old Testament much as English-speaking Christians used to be grounded in 'the language of Canaan.'

Wilcox then makes an important point: 'those who give support - though admittedly qualified support' - to Torrey's position approach the material with a view to assessing the nature, extent, and intrinsic (historical) worth of such source material as Luke may have used....: the other group makes its approach rather from the standpoint that Acts represents a literary whole: it is in the true sense not so much a compilation as a genuinely literary composition.'** This divergence of approach is crucial to the present study, and if we wish to contend for the legitimacy of the first approach we have no desire to be unfair to exponents of the second: thus Sparks sees in Luke a 'Christian historical

* JTS (NS)1:1950.

** Wilcox pll.

dramatist.' whose septuagintisms are one element in his total dramatic scheme. They are 'pieces of literary scenery', 'deliberately devised and cunningly conceived to provide the right background for the action.'*

We must reiterate however that Luke's literary and historical concerns are not mutually exclusive. He was no more a compiler of an early Christian scrapbook, than a composer of 'cunningly devised fables.' If he had obtained some Aramaic source document about Peter he could have used it for literary purposes, and employed its Semitic phraseology for dramatic and literary effect.

Wilcox concludes an exhaustive study of Semitisms by suggesting that 'the parts of Acts in which we may have the greatest confidence in postulating sources are found in that section which Harnack on quite different grounds assigned to his 'Antioch source'**. Semitisms proper of a 'hard core' type he identifies in particular in the speech of Stephen and that of Paul at Pisidian Antioch.

What of Peter's speeches? Wilcox notes the idiom

ἐκλέγεσθαι which occurs in his address to the Jerusalem Council. (15:7: ἄφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων, ἐν ὧν ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ στόματος μου ἀκοῦσαι τὰ ἐθνη τὸν λόγον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου)

* Sparks in JTS 1:1950

** Wilcox p.11.

This awkward Greek does not seem to be explicable as a Septuagintalism and the very same idiom has turned up in the Manual of Discipline at Qumran.* The use of this abnormal form at this point may suggest that Luke was 'incorporating' a piece of earlier tradition.' However Wilcox is not impressed by Torrey's alleged mistranslation at 3:16. There are, he says, no textual variants here: ancient writers did not feel the difficulty noted by Torrey, and in any event, 'the name' ($\alpha\psi\tau\eta$) is not infrequently found in Jewish writings as a periphrasis for God.

Is any kind of certain conclusion possible?

Wilcox himself notes that 'there has been a clear trend away from theories attempting to analyse Acts into sources... Other influences have been the tendency, following Dibelius, to regard the book, and the speeches especially as due to Luke's own literary

* IQS4:22

נִיֵּא בָּם בְּחֵר נֵא

עוֹלָמִית לְבְרִית 'For God has chosen them for an eternal covenant.' (Wilcox p.92-93)

(and perhaps also theological) bent.* His own most careful search for Semitisms leads to a somewhat less pessimistic view: 'first...there are O.T. quotations and allusions in Acts which contain Targumic and other Semitic readings not found in the LXX: secondly, there are indications that even some of the 'septuagintalsms' owe their presence in Acts to some liturgical or apologetical influence: finally, that there are in addition a number of instances where the Semitic nature of the text cannot be traced to the Septuagint.'

Sources of some kind, then, lie under the surface of Acts, even if we cannot identify them precisely. If Torrey's attempts to discover Semitic mistranslations in Peter's speeches have not succeeded, we are left with the probability that Luke was using, for the early part of Acts, written sources which existed at some

* Possible links between Stephen and the Samaritans are discussed in ch.5. Wilcox also notes in Paul's speech at Pisidian Antioch 'traces of Targumic textual tradition' - the reference is to 1 Sam.13:14; when Paul calls David ' a man according to my heart' he agrees with the Targum against MT and the LXX.

stage in a Semitic dress.*

The linguistic evidence then, does not justify a verdict of more than 'not proven': what of theological study? Do the ideas expressed in Peter's speeches show such antiquity and originality that we cannot attribute them simply to Luke's artistic imagination?

C.H.Dodd argued that 'negatively, there are few, if any, ideas or expressions introduced which might arouse suspicion because of their resemblance to writings emanating, like Acts, from the Gentile church in the late first century 'and' positively, the speeches in questions as well as parts of the narrative in which they are embedded, have been shown to contain a large element of Semitism: we may with some confidence take

* The notorious $\text{עָמַלְתָּ} \text{לִּי} \text{אֶת־הַקָּהָל}$ of Acts 1;15, 2;44 and 2;47 is exhaustively discussed by Wilcox. (p93-100) He concludes that it may represent the Hebrew קָהָל in the semi-technical sense of 'religious community'. Thus in Qumran's Manual of Discipline, (1 QS 6;14), $\text{לְהַיְיבָא} \text{לְקָהָל}$ meant 'to belong to the community.'

Prof. M. Black concludes that 'the Qumran usage seems conclusive for the sense 'to be united in the (Christian) fellowship.' (An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, p.10, footnote.) This means we have ancient Palestinian material in close proximity to Peter's early speeches.

these speeches to represent, not indeed what Peter said on this or that occasion, but the kerygma of the church at Jerusalem at an early period.*

Dodd's famous idea of the 'kerygma' or 'proclamation' has been summarised under five headings:

- 1) The age of fulfilment has dawned.
- 2) This has taken place through the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.
- 3) By virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God, as Messianic head of the New Israel.
- 4) The Holy Spirit in the church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory.
- 5) The Messianic age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ.

Finally, the kerygma closes with an appeal for repentance, the offer of forgiveness and of the Holy Spirit.

Comparing the kerygma according to Paul with the 'Jerusalem' kerygma of Acts, Dodd claimed to identify three important differences of emphasis.

- 1) In the Jerusalem theology Jesus is not 'called Son of God'. Instead his titles are taken from the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah. He is the Holy and Righteous

* C.H.Dodd: The Apostolic preaching and its developments;
p.19-21.

'Servant' of God.'*

2) 'The Jerusalem kerygma does not assert that Christ died 'for our sins'. The result of the life, death and resurrection of Christ is the forgiveness of sins, but this forgiveness is not specifically connected with his death.'**

The distinctive positive element in the Jerusalem version of the good news is, according to Dodd, its servant (Greek: 'pais') christology. But does this crucial feature of the Petrine speeches indicate a true historical appreciation of the views which were held in Jerusalem, and even by Peter? Or is it a 'creative' conjecture by Luke?

Prof. O. Cullmann has strongly defended the first position: 'The Acts of the Apostles' he wrote - offers us the strongest proofs that in the most ancient period of early Christianity there existed an 'ebed Yahweh' christology - or more accurately a 'paidology'..This

* APD p21ff.

** APD p25. Dodd makes the interesting suggestion that Paul did not invent this idea himself. 'Since the Jerusalem kerygma applies to Christ the Isaianic idea of servant, the way was at least open to interpret his death on the lines of Isaiah 53. Acts 8:32-35 may suggest the possibility that this step was taken by the school of Stephen and Philip.'

is probably the oldest known solution to the christological problem. The account of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch...shows that in the first century Jesus was explicitly identified with the Ebed Yahweh.'*

Cullmann then notes that the title $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ which is used in the LXX to translate the 'Ebed Yahweh' of Isaiah 53 - occurs four times in Acts 3 and 4 'and in no other book of the New Testament.'

The first of these references is found in Peter's speech after the healing of the lame man: 'The God of our fathers glorified his servant ($\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$) Jesus.' (3:13). The second, later in the same speech, tells us that 'God, having raised up his servant ($\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$) sent him to you first,' The other two references are found in the believers' hymn of praise after the release of Peter and John: 'Truly in this city there were gathered together against the holy servant ($\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$) Jesus...both Herod and Pontius Pilate...(4:27) and 'signs and wonders are performed through the name of thy holy servant ($\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$) Jesus.' (4:30)

The term thus occurs in Peter's speech and in the hymn of thanksgiving: Cullmann comments, ' $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$ is used almost as a terminus technicus which has a tendency to become a proper name - as did happen in the case of 'Christ'. This confirms the existence of a very old

* Cullmann: Christology of the New Testament p73.

Christology on the basis of which Jesus was called the 'ebed Yahweh'. This christology later disappears, but it must extend back to the very earliest period, since the author of Acts preserved its traces precisely in the first part of his book.'*

Can we attach the 'pais-christology' to the name of Peter? Noting that the four references occur 'in a speech attributed to Peter' and 'in prayers of the Church in the presence of Peter,' Cullmann concludes: 'It is probably not venturing too much to draw the conclusion that (!) it was the apostle Peter who by preference designated Jesus 'the suffering servant of God'...' 'Are we not perhaps unjust to Peter when we place him in the shadow of Paul? '**

* *ibid.*

** Christology p 74-5. Cullmann makes the same point in 'Peter:Apostle-Disciple-Martyr!p.58-59.He also notes that the servant-christology occurs in the 1st epistle of Peter, 2:21ff: 'Even if it was not written by Peter, the anonymous writer who ascribed it to him would nevertheless have known just as did the author of Acts that Peter preferred to speak of Jesus in terms of the suffering servant of God.' If this is too dogmatic a conclusion, the appearance of the 'servant' idea both in the Petrine part of Acts and in 1 Peter may at least rank as an 'undesigned coincidence' of thought.

Here our problem is that we lack other evidence. Paul overshadows Peter because we possess his letters: few would ascribe 2 Peter to the apostle: its authenticity was contested even in antiquity, and even the impressive 1 Peter is variously assessed as a baptismal liturgy and a non-Petrine work dating from the persecution under Domitian. If it were certainly written by Cephas himself, perhaps with the help of Silvanus - one could use it to make comparisons with the Peter of Acts. So used, it can only be said to be 'not incompatible'. If written by Peter, the epistle was presumably composed some time after the span of history which Acts covers, and furthermore, its references to persons and events are of uncertain interpretation. 'Babylon' could mean 'Rome', and 'my son Mark' and 'Silvanus' could well be the John, Mark and Silas of Acts. But we cannot point to the 'undesigned coincidences' that link Acts with the Pauline letters.*

Nevertheless, as with Stephen, there would seem to be a *prima facie* case for concluding that Luke recorded genuine traditions about the work, words and ideas of Peter: if he magnified and simplified, he did not falsify the greatest of the Founding Fathers.

This conclusion has, however, been denied by U. Wilckens, whose conclusion is uncompromising: 'Luke

* 1 Peter 5:12-13.

includes everything which he says, including the material which he derived from various traditions, within the framework of his general conception of Salvation-history. To present this is the aim of Luke the theologian, which he consistently ('konsequent') carried out in his two-volume work: the latter must therefore be understood and evaluated entirely as his own work. The apostolic speeches in Acts, however, are principally summaries of this Lucan theological conception: they are not to be regarded as testimonies to ancient or even original primitive Christian theology, but as Lucan theology at the turn of the first century'.* (author's italics)

- * Wilckens: Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte: p.186.
- 'Lukas spannt alles, was er sagt, einschliesslich dessen, was er aus verschiedenen Traditionen übernommen hat, in den Rahmen seines heilsgeschichtlichen Gesamtkonzeption ein. Sie darzustellen ist das Ziel des Theologen Lukas, das er mit seinem Doppelwerk konsequent verfolgt und das von daher ganz und gar als sein Werk zu verstehen und zu verwerten ist. Die Apostelreden der Acta sind in hervorragendem Sinne Summarien dieser seiner theologischen Konzeption: sie sind nicht als Zeugnisse alter oder gar ältester urchristlicher Theologie, sondern Lukanischer Theologie des ausgehenden ersten Jahrhunderts zu werten.'

Wilckens certainly works out his own theory with the same consistency which we see in Luke. Any work in which A describes B will tell us something about A. What it tells us about B will depend on our critical estimate of A's aim, ability and trustworthiness. Wilckens discovers in the speeches of Acts much of A and next to nothing of B; much of Luke and little of Peter: which is another way of saying that Luke was a very poor historian.

A presupposition is noticeable at once: Luke is referred to as a theologian (*Die Gesamtkonzeption des Theologen Lukas*) But clearly Luke's interests were not purely theological. His method, wrote C.K. Barrett, 'is that of historical biography'.* 'The twelve were with him, and Mary called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and many other, who provided for him out of their means.' (Luke 8:3) 'Some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us, bringing us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus with whom we should lodge' (Acts 21:16). Statements like this indicate an author as interested in people and places as in theology; and once more we must ask whether the 'self-denying ordinance' of Conzelmann and Wilckens is valid, and whether it is possible

* C.K. Barrett: Luke the historian in recent study.

to elucidate Luke's theology without reference to his other concerns.

One of these concerns was, according to his own manifesto, historical. He claimed to have recorded what Jesus 'began to do and teach' (Acts 1:1) and in his second book he clearly tried to do the same for his disciples. Literary study makes clear that he did not have a sayings-tradition of the apostles as he did about Jesus, and that he was permitted, by the convention of his time, to compose speeches for his characters: this does not mean, however, that he would not have used traditional material if it was available.

Furthermore, the quest for sources in Acts, while failing to reach precise conclusions, has certainly shown that written sources of some kind existed. Stephen's speech in particular would seem to be fatal to Wilckens' theory that the mission addresses of Acts are Lucan compositions pure and simple. He disposes of it thus: 'Stephen's speech (7:1ff) must be left out of account because of its special character. Only the conclusion (7:51ff) is of interest for our special study.'* It can hardly be regarded as 'Lucan theology at the turn of the first century.'!

How then does Wilckens dispose of the two arguments in favour of 'Petrine' speeches by Peter: the alleged

* Wilckens p 30ff.

Semitisms embedded in them and their 'servant christology'?

Prominent among possible Semitisms is the crux at Acts 3:16: 'And his name, by faith in his name, has made this man strong.' Wilckens admits that this can hardly be ascribed to Luke.* It was he suggests, the original ending of the story of the lame man: 'This would then have ended at 3:16. Peter holds the healed man by the hand, the crowd runs together in amazement (a typical trait in miracle stories) and the apostle gives the explanation of the miracle which has taken place in a concluding short sentence' (3:16)**

Such an explanation must mean that the story of the lame man existed in written form and that there was a tradition of words - or at least one word - of Peter. It makes no sense to assume that the healing story came to Luke in the form of oral tradition, that he memorised the clumsy Greek of 3:16, and then included it in the speech he had composed for the apostle.

Another alleged Semitism in the Petrine speeches occurs at 10:38: 'Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ, ὡς ἔχρισεν αὐτὸν ὁ θεὸς Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ καὶ δυνάμει.'

* 'Der Satz ist so umständlich und ungeschickt formuliert, dass man ihn schwerlich als lukanische Formulierung hinnehmen kann.'

** Wilckens p41.

The redundant $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ certainly looks Semitic enough, and the previous sentence, vv.36 and 37, is notoriously obscure. Dibelius concluded that the primitive Jerusalem kerygma had been 'written up' and enlarged by Luke.* Wilckens on the other hand disposes of the problem by treating 36a as an anacoluthon, while rejecting the theory of mistranslation from Aramaic proposed by Torrey.**

Nor is Wilckens impressed by the theological arguments for a Petrine or at least Palestinian 'servant - christology': 'Whether or not there was an old Palestinian pais-Christology cannot be decided positively or negatively from the texts which lie before us.'*** We are dealing with a liturgical formula quoted by Luke: 'The claim that in Acts 3ff we are dealing with ' a layer of Palestinian tradition which is distinguished for its antiquity' does not carry conviction as a counter - argument, for we have shown that the speech in Acts 3:13ff was conceived by Luke himself.'**** The argument put forward by Wilckens fails to deal with one obvious question: why did Luke, in conceiving and composing his speeches, attribute a 'pais-christology' to Peter and to nobody else? Why, likewise, did he attribute

* Essays p98.

** Torrey p.35.

*** Wilckens p.164-165.

**** Wilckens p.166.

anti-temple views to Stephen? The only reasonable conclusion is that he genuinely believed that he was correctly presenting the ideas of Peter and Stephen. No literary analysis of the speeches will satisfy everybody, but this need not prevent us from concluding that the author did use traditional material (as the alleged Semitisms indicate) and that when he included the 'servant christology' he was attempting to convey the ideas of Peter as he did those of Paul in the speech at Pisidian Antioch. He stood closer to Paul than he did to Peter, who was certainly much more complicated both in thought and personality than the record of Acts would indicate. But if Luke was right in thinking that Stephen opposed the temple, then he was probably right in ascribing a 'servant christology' to Peter. In Luke-Acts Peter appears with the grand simplicity of folk-memory, recorded by a writer of the second generation. That does not make him a figure of fiction.

A NOTE ON EPICTETUS:

The sayings of Epictetus are worth comparing with those of Jesus as to their transmission and preservation. A conscious academic purpose informed the mind of Arrian, but he also had 'edificatory' intentions. He recorded the master's words as precisely as possible in order to 'incite the minds of his hearers to the best things' (κινῆσαι τὰς γνώμης τῶν ἀκούοντων πρὸς τὰ βέλτιστα:1:1:5).

In addition, some of his logia have more 'Sitz im Leben' than others. Like Jesus, Epictetus is addressed by unnamed questioners. 'There came in to visit Epictetus one day a man who was on his way to Rome, where he was engaged in a lawsuit involving an honour to be bestowed upon him...' (III:IX:I) 'When an official came to see him, Epictetus, after making some special enquiries about other matters asked him if he had children and a wife.' (I:XI:I) 'Now when someone asked him...' (*πρωτόμηνον δέ τις* I:XIII:I - this formula also occurs at VI:VI:I) 'The procurator of Epirus took the side in an undignified manner of a comic actor...' III:IV:I. Neither he nor the imperial bailiff (*διορθωτής*) who also visits Epictetus (III:VII:1) are named.

We have here the same influence which form critical study has observed in the teaching of Jesus - that of 'rounding-down' of the tradition by leaving out inessential points as to date, place, time and dramatis personae. It is noteworthy that this appears not only in folk-tradition, but also in the work of Arrian, a devoted disciple who was concerned to make a verbatim record. One could not reconstruct the life of Epictetus from the Discourses, detailed as they are, and all we need to know about him, according to Oldfather, is that he had been a slave and came from Phrygia, the home of religious enthusiasm: 'Besides these two illuminating facts, the other details of his life are of relatively

little importance.'*

One other parallel to the teaching of Jesus is the collection of 'scattered sayings' (Σποράδην πινά) in Books III, VI, XI, XIII. These resemble the scattered sayings of Jesus, like those about salt preserved in Mk. 9:49-50. The motive of preserving the master's words for the benefit of posterity seems to be the same for Arrian as for the evangelists, though their intellectual and social background differs greatly.

Perhaps an ever closer parallel - certainly as to teaching method, is between Epictetus and Paul. The dialogue technique of the diatribe was common to both:

'τί οὖν ποιήσωμεν; - Αὕτη ἐστὶ ῥήσις τοῦ φιλοσοφούντος τῷ ὄντι καὶ ὠδινόντος 1.XXII.11 '

The two thinkers answered that question very differently, but they used a similar vocabulary and methods of argument.

PAUL'S SPEECHES

Paul's speeches are summarised by Cadbury as follows:**

- 1) Address in the synagogue at Antioch in Psidia. (13;16-41)
- 2) Address at Lystra (15;15-17)
- 3) Address at Athens (17;22-31)
- 4) Address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (20;18-35)
- 5) Defence on the barrack stairs at Jerusalem (22;1-34)

* Epictetus: Loeb Ed. Vol.1.p VIII .

** Beg V. p.403.

- 6) Defence before the Sanhedrin (23,1,6b.)
- 7) Defence before Felix (24;10-21)
- 8) Defence before Agrippa (26;2-23)
- 9) Address to the Jews in Rome (23;17-20 and 25-28)

His speeches therefore include two mission addresses to Gentiles (Lystra and Athens) and one to Jews (Pisidian Antioch) It seems clear from the general literary structure of the Book that these are intended as sample pieces, to give us an idea of how Paul approached different kinds of audience; this is skilfully and satisfactorily done. From Miletus onward the personality of Paul begins to loom larger in the story, and is built up by means of the eloquent defences which Paul makes before kings and governors. Thus is created the popular picture of Paul, which, in spite of the protests of purists like Professor John Knox, is likely to hold the field.*As Cadbury noted, 'The speeches having once become famous, men naturally prefer to accept them as authentic utterances of the actors.'

* See ch.6 'Saul alias Paul'. In the popular 'Ladybird' series of children's books, for example, the life of Paul is an illustrated version of the Acts story, Damascus Road, speech to Agrippa, shipwreck and all. One young reader declared that she preferred the Ladybird to the Biblical account 'because it tells you how Paul got his head cut off.'

Even if the speeches in their present form can hardly be verbatim reports, one must still ask whether they represent the author's own idea or whether he had any traditional source material, deriving perhaps from the original speaker himself. With Paul's speeches we can after all what can hardly be done with any of the other leading characters, and compare them with Paul's own letters.

The address at Antioch in Pisidia 'is given in extenso' - wrote F.F.Bruce, 'probably to give the reader a sample of Paul's synagogue addresses.'*This seems fairly certain, but is it a record of the kind of thing Paul said, or of what Luke thought he might have said?

The address begins with a summary of the history of Israel, addressed to both Jews and God-fearers. It describes the providence of God to Israel, culminating in the gift of 'a saviour, Jesus, as he promised.' The story of the death and resurrection of Jesus is supported with favourite proof texts: notably Psalm 2;7, Isaiah 65;3 and Psalm 16;10. Of 'the first reported sermon of Paul' F.F.Bruce claimed 'Its theology is definitely Pauline, though not so developed as his later teaching. It forms a bridge between the primitive preaching of the early chapters of Acts and the mature

* Bruce p.262.

doctrine of the epistles.'*

A contrary view is taken by Haenchen: 'There is no trace here of popular tradition or of an itinerary such as appears in later chapters. Here Luke has created, not indeed out of nothing; out of the Christian preaching of his own time, and his experiences with Jews and Gentiles he has composed a summary of the history of the Pauline mission...' Luke has selected only what was edifying for his own time: 'The daily task of the missionary, the long journeys with their weariness and danger, the pastoral conversations with new converts...all this was not 'inspirational'(erbau-lich) in the understanding of Luke and his own time.. '**

Against this we must note that Dibelius, the great champion of the itinerary theory, was able to detect traces of a travel record in Acts 13-14. 'The Itinerary

* Bruce p.262.

** Haenchen p 366: Does not this otherwise acute comment precisely miss the point of the Miletus address? Luke could not possibly record pastoral conversations at every place in the itinerary; is it not precisely in the Farewell Address at Miletus that he makes the reader aware of what Paul endured? 'For three years I did not cease night and day to admonish every one of you with tears.'(20:31). Is not this the equivalent of 2 Cor.11; 23-26? Also, the shipwreck incident gives some impression of the toil and danger of the missionary's career.

first becomes noticeable in 13;4...the first mention of Paul by name in the itinerary comes...in 13;13 with the words εἰς πρὸς τοὺς Παύλου...throughout the itinerary appears as the basis of the composition.* There seems, moreover, to be no 'apologetical' motive which could lead the author to construct such a curious route for the missionaries if he had not believed that this was the course they actually followed.**

But if the frame was not constructed by the author, what of the picture he placed in it? Can we decide between the genuine exposition of Pauline theology proposed by Bruce, and the Lucan reconstruction favoured by Haenchen?

In the useful table of parallels which C.H.Dodd included in his book 'The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments', most of the features of the kerygma are found to appear in the speech at Pisidian Antioch; one point looks typically Lucan - the reference to the post-resurrection period: 'for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee and Jerusalem,

* Dibelius : Essays p6.

** John Mark deserts the missionary party at 13;13, in the middle of the journey Paphos-Perga-Pisidian Antioch. This information was hardly 'inspirational' and its inclusion cannot be put down to motives of piety.

who are now his witnesses to the people.' (12;31). The claim that the Lord was seen by his disciples over a fixed period of time (many days = 40 days: Acts 1;3) seems to be a characteristic idea of Luke's.* On the other hand v39 (by him everyone that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses') looks like a fair layman's attempt to sum up Paul's teaching on justification by faith.

Perhaps then the Pisidian Antioch speech might best be regarded as a Lucan composition - a 'keynote speech' like that of Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth - intended to represent Paul's general approach to Jews: however, it is here, perhaps unexpectedly, that M. Wilcox claims to have discovered traces of Semitic source material. Paul's quotation from the 'Old Testament: 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who shall do all my will' seems to combine three texts: Psalm 89:21 ('I found David the son of Jesse'), 1 Sam 13;14 ('a man according to my heart') and - apparently - Isaiah 44:28. But the reference is to the Aramaic Targum of 1 Sam 13;14, which reads 'a man doing

* 'The most important topographical point...is the transfer of the resurrection appearances to Jerusalem... The journey to Galilee, of which Mark 14;28 and 16;7 speak, is replaced by a prophecy spoken in Galilee concerning what will take place in Jerusalem.' Conzelmann TSL p.93.

his will.'* The suggestion is that we have here a 'testimonium fragment' or collection of proof texts, of a kind which was in use in the early church and indeed among the covenanters of Qumran. The very same combination of texts also occurs in 1 Clement 18;1. Wilcox also notices a parallel between Paul's words to Elymas the sorcerer - 'you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time' - with the Aramaic Targum of Psalm 88;9.**

If all this seems very hypothetical, it is somewhat strengthened by the observation of references

* The Aramaic is **עֲבִיר רְצוֹנְתָּהּ** which replaces the Hebrew **אִישׁ כִּלְבָבוֹ**. Why then do both phrases ('a man according to my heart' representing **אִישׁ כִּלְבָבוֹ**) turn up here? Wilcox suggests that the phrase 'who shall do all my will' (**ὅς ποιεῖ πάντα τὰ θελήματα μου**) represents, not Isaiah 44;28, which refers to Cyrus and not to David, but the Targum tradition of 1 Sam.13;14 combined here with that of the Hebrew and M.T.

** 'Like the untimely born and the mole, who are blind and do not see the sun.' **חֹךְ נְפֹלָא וְאִשּׁוּתִיָּא**
דִּי עֲבִיין וְלֹא חֲגִוּן שְׂמֵשָׁא

'We may have here a second instance of 'community of tradition' between the words of Paul, as cited in Acts, and a Targum.' (Wilcox p24)

to Targumic tradition in the speech of Stephen, which, as we have seen requires us to suppose a written source of some kind. Thus, at Acts 7;3, Stephen's quotation of Genesis 12;1 agrees with the version of Targum pseudo-Jonathan: 'Go out from your land...go into the land which I shall show you.'* Pointing out that 'this speech begins with a resumé of Israel's history', Wilcox adds that 'in precisely the earlier section of the speech are points of contact with Stephen observed above. Further, this 'summary' ends exactly at v22 in which... the Targum reading is located. From hereon....the speech (includes) not only material found in Mark and Luke, but also certain elements which may be traces of a kerygmatic or credal nature.'

Thus there is a prima facie case for supposing that traditional material was used in the composition of the Pisidian Antioch speech. Luke has 'written this up' in his own style, adding to the plain credal confession of v30 ('God raised him from the dead.') his own understanding of the appearances of the Lord. He concluded with a fair summary of Paul's teaching on salvation through faith. Whether it was Paul who was familiar with the Aramaic Targum of 1 Samuel we have no means of telling: but this much credit may be given to Luke the

* $\delta\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\eta\upsilon\ \gamma\eta\upsilon\ \gamma\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\upsilon\ \sigma\alpha\ \delta\epsilon\iota\chi\omega = \text{דל דארצא דאחרינך} =$

historian: where he has used a source, it is likely that the source really had something to do with the events and the actors described.

PAUL ON THE AREOPAGUS

Paul's Areopagus speech is something of a classic; here for the first time Athens encountered Jerusalem and made an attempt at dialogue. Not for the last time, it seems, they failed to communicate. In the somewhat sentimental painting by the French artist André Bida (1808 - 1895)*, Paul stands with uplifted hand at the top of a classical staircase, while the philosophers, elegantly draped and posed, express various attitudes of dissent and boredom. No doubt it was not really like that at all! But was it as Luke describes it? Did Paul really make an appearance on Mars Hill - or before the court of the Areopagus, for the term is ambiguous - and did he express the views that Luke attributes to him?

Martin Dibelius, in a famous essay,** noted that the Areopagus scene 'denotes and is intended to denote, a climax of the book...The speech is the only sermon reported by the author which is preached to the Gentiles by the Apostle to the Gentiles. 'Dibelius went on to

* The Apostles in Art: W.Shaw Sparrow:p.69.

** Paul on the Areopagus - Essays. p.69.

claim that previous debate had been impeded because scholars had axes to grind: on the one hand Harnack and Ed. Meyer, for instance, wanted to prove that Paul could have made the speech and did in fact make it, while Norden and Alfred Loisy sought to prove the exact opposite. Dibelius proposed a reverse method; to look first at the meaning and then at historicity and the importance of the speech in the book of Acts.

As analysed by Dibelius the speech turns out to possess the classical sermon form of an introduction, three main headings and a conclusion. From the topical reference to the 'Altar to the Unknown God' the speaker proceeds to argue that:

- 1) God, creator and Lord of the world, needs no temples, for he does not stand in need of anything. (v24-25)
- 2) God created all men in order that they should seek after him. (v 26-27)
- 3) The relationship of men with God - they are 'offspring of God' - should exclude all worship of pagan images. (v 28-29)

Then follows the conclusion: God now ordains that repentance be preached to men because the Day of Judgment lies ahead. Then God will judge the world by a man 'whom he has caused to rise from the dead.' (v30-31)

Dibelius noticed that the main theme of the speech was general monotheism: 'only at the end do we find any reference to Jesus and his resurrection...the specifically

Christian content of the speech is presented only in the last two verses. 'The first topic of the address - that God does not need any human worship - rests upon 'Old Testament ideas expressed in Hellenistic language.' The word *θεραπεία* as applied to worship (v24) is quite unscriptural but familiar from Xenophon and Plato.* God, who 'needs nothing and gives us everything' ...has created human beings in order that they may inhabit the earth, and has made it possible for them to have dwellings, seasons, and zones of habitation, in order that they should seek after 'him.'

God is said to have obtained for men *καιρούς και τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν*.

What are the *καιρούς* ? Are they historical epochs, of the great world-empires? Or are they the seasons of the year? Dibelius chose the latter sense**, and thus preferred a 'philosophical' interpretation of the speech to an 'Old Testament' one. The *ὁροθεσίαι* are then the two inhabitable zones of the globe - north and south temperate as opposed to the uninhabited arctic and tropical zones. God's relation to man is stated by means of quotations from two Greek Poets; the second is

* Essays p.42.

** This view was queried by A.D.Nock (Gnomon, 1953, p505). According to Nock, the passage means: 'God has fixed the when and the where.'

the Stoic Aratus: τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμεν .The first - 'In him we live and move and have our being' - would seem to derive from that πρὸ φήτης , that ἐν γὰρ θεός , * Epimenides the Cretan. Past times were times of ignorance - this approach excuses the heathen as much as possible - and now, (here is an indirect reference to Jesus) God will judge the world by means of a man whom he has raised from the dead. Dibelius concluded that if anything was missing, it was intentionally missing. 'The composition of the speech makes clear that it forms an intended whole, which reaches an intended ending.'

And what is missing is in fact the typical Pauline doctrine of salvation through Christ. The speech 'has a rational character which is foreign to the New Testament.' The author of the passionate denunciation of the pagan vices in Romans 1-2 would never have rated natural knowledge of God so highly. The speech is a Lucan composition, written about A.D. 90 as a guide to evangelists of the authors own time.**

There are certainly no Aramaisms in the Areopagus

* Bruce p.338

** Dibelius rejected the idea that the speech was a later interpolation, and noted that it was set in the framework of the 'itinerary'. Compare, for example, the matter of fact details about the movements of Silas and Timothy in 17;14-15.

address, or any traces of pre-Lucan source material. Much of the argument about authenticity has therefore turned on the question: could Paul have made this speech? Are its ideas so incompatible with his own that we cannot attribute it to him? After a close study of the literary form of the speech Dibelius answered in the negative, as have other recent critics.* A notable attempt to prove the contrary is that of B. Gärtner in his monograph, 'The Areopagus speech and Natural Revelation.'¹¹ Gärtner argues that the speech is related not only to Hellenistic Greek philosophy, but also to religious ideas common in the Jewish dispersion, and in particular with Wisdom 13-15. Paul was, after all, a Jew of the Dispersion himself! 'Foolish are they who live in ignorance of God...they had not power to know him that is ($\epsilon \omega \nu$), neither by giving heed to the works did they recognise the artificer ($\tau \epsilon \chi \nu \eta \tau \eta \varsigma$).' 'The way in which chapter 13 of the Wisdom of Solomon conceives the visible world as a work of art and God as its artificer is pure Greek, whereas the application of the theory of natural revelation is Old Testament Jewish.'¹²

* Notably P. Vielhauer: Zum Paulinismus der Apg. Aufsätze zum N.T.p. 9-24 Haenchen: Apg.p.464-468. Norden: Agnostas Theos.p.129.

¹² Gärtner p.249.

Gärtner concluded his study with a discussion of the historicity of the speech. While no altar specifically inscribed 'To an Unknown God' has yet been found, that is no reason to deny that one existed.* As to the ideas of the speech: 'Till it can be shown that the theology of the speech directly conflicts with that of the epistles, we cannot dismiss its Pauline character.' Paul's letters contain ideas which have their counterparts in the wisdom of Solomon: this is particularly true of Romans, where we see the same structure of ideas as is found in Wisdom 13-15 and Acts 17...This tradition can be classified as Jewish Diaspora propaganda.** Thus Gärtner was able to regard the speech as Pauline in origin, but when it comes to the actual terminology and literary form, Lucan influence must be allowed for.***

Certainly Gärtner has succeeded in showing that the Areopagus speech has Jewish as well as Hellenistic overtones. As to the Pauline epistles, however, he seems to have shown only that they are 'not incompatible'. Of course Paul must have adapted his message to his audience and could have quoted Greek poets to Athenian

* Inscriptions are on record to 'Unknown Gods' (plural), in particular at Athens. (Bruce p 335 - 336)

** Gärtner p 249.

*** Gärtner p.252.p.250.

intellectuals, but in the absence of any definite signs of pre-Lucan source material, and in view of the impressive literary unity of the speech itself, any argument as to historicity must depend on a general consideration of this part of Acts as a whole. It occurs in a section where there is a good deal of 'unedifying' information about people and places; the famous references to Claudius and Gallio occur at 18;2 and 18;12. There is also considerable, though not complete, agreement with the data provided by the epistles.* But most important of all is the fact that the Areopagus address was something of a flop: 'Some mocked and others said, we will hear you again about this.' Would Luke have invented, for the glorification of Paul, an incident which showed him as unsuccessful? Would he have created 'ex nihilo' an example of how to

* R.P.C.Hanson: Acts of the Apostles, p.175. 'According to this account Paul journeyed on to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy behind; they were to join him later. In 1 Thess 3;1-6 it is made clear that Timothy accompanied Paul to Athens, that from there he was sent back to Salonika, and that Timothy later returned to him, (presumably but not certainly at Athens) with the good news of the Christians at Thessalonica. But these are precisely the small differences which one would expect between a generally reliable account given later to a third party and a letter written in the midst of the events themselves.'

present the gospel to Gentile intellectuals and then concluded with the lame admission that hardly any intellectuals were converted? If he invented Dionysius and Damaris, why not a few more distinguished converts? Much the most reasonable conclusion is that Paul did attempt a dialogue with Stoic and Epicurean philosophers at Athens, and that he tried to approach them in terms of the Hellenistic Jewish theology which Gartner has here described.*

Yet the Areopagus speech must, in its present form, be regarded as a Lucan composition: for it is not a mere sermon outline, a skeleton of Paul's main headings, it is, as Dibelius showed, a remarkable literary creation in its own right. Indeed, Gartner himself has conceded this as to 'actual terminology and literary form'. We need not doubt that the apostle who sought to be all things to all men, 'in addressing unconverted pagans would...have tried to meet them halfway'**, but must leave open the question as to how much of his precise thought Luke has preserved here. Thus we regard the Areopagus encounter, with all grateful respect to Dibelius, as both historical and symbolical. As only a Pericles would merit the Funeral Oration, so the Areopagus address was worthy only of a Paul.

* See additional note number 9

** Nock p.506.

'WHAT I TELL YOU THREE TIMES IS TRUE' (PAUL'S DEFENCE)

The author of Acts must have attached great importance to the story of Paul's conversion. It is related three times, in chapters 9, 22 and 26. Three times also before the mob, before Felix and before Agrippa - does Paul defend his life and work.* Clearly Luke intended to make a profound impression on his readers by this repetition. But did Paul in fact make these great historical speeches? Did he say anything like the words which Luke attributes to him, and are the important statements about his life story, which Luke attributes to him, worthy of credit?**

Chief among sceptics is Haenchen: of Paul's speech before Agrippa he writes: 'In reality we are dealing here not with the historical trial of Paul, but with the conflict between Judaism and Christianity on account of the Christian mission, which certainly found

* In chapters 22, 24, 26.

** The value of threefold repetition, familiar in the teaching of Jesus, was noted by Lewis Carroll in

'The Hunting of the Shark'

'Just the place for a Shark! I have said it twice:
That alone should encourage the crew.
Just the place for a Snark! I have said it thrice:
What I tell you three times is true.'

in Paul its victorious advocate.'* The only fact that Haenchen will allow us is that Paul really did appeal to Caesar: 'We do not know what the command of Festus really was, against which Paul appealed to Caesar. Possibly Luke did not know either, and therefore inferred, from the fact of the appeal and his own ideal picture of the Roman official, that hypothetical situation, which he portrayed with all his literary art.'** Thus Haenchen sees Luke as a literary artist spinning an exciting yarn with the minimum of material. On the other hand, Sherwin-White finds Luke's version of Paul's appeal quite credible. 'The account of the trial before Festus and Felix is sufficiently accurate in all its details....Paul is objecting not to the jurisdiction of Festus, but to his apparent intention of giving the Jewish clergy excessive influence in his court by transferring the hearing to Jerusalem, even though it is to be 'ἐπὶ ἐμοῖς' - i.e. before Festus. Festus could not hand over his capital jurisdiction....to a provincial tribunal such as the Sanhedrin...but nothing prevented him from using the Sanhedrin, or members of it, as his own consilium. That is what

* H p. 617.

** H p.598.

Paul feared.'* Sherwin-White also compares the case of Dio of Prusa, which Pliny transferred to Nicaea because the accusers complained that Dio had too many friends in Prusa.

In the absence of any second source for this part of the story, our judgement will depend on our estimate of Luke's veracity as a whole. As a general principle we hold that he has not invented his 'dramatis personae', and there is therefore no need to doubt the existence of Claudius Lysias the Tribune, the son of Paul's sister, the conspiracy to kill Paul, Ananias the High Priest**, and Tertullus the lawyer. Paul's speeches, however, contain no Aramaisms and show no signs of source-material. They may therefore be compositions by Luke. Clearly too the author sought to express his admiration for Paul. The eloquent defence before Agrippa is a climax to the Pauline story: 'This was not done in a corner' (26;26). It is not necessary, however, to accuse Luke of substituting a 'theologia gloriae' for a 'theologia crucis'. Simple admiration for his hero

* SWp68, p67.: also Pliny Ep.X,81;3-4.A.H.M.Jones also regards the appeal before Festus as fact, not fiction. (Studies in Roman government and law p.64)

** Ananias the High Priest appears in Josephus. According to BJ.ii;17;9, he was killed by the insurgents at the outbreak of the war with Rome.

is motive enough.

With little to go on except the texts themselves, it might be thought hopeless to attempt to analyse further. One who tried was Kirsopp Lake. 'In ch.9 (Ananias) speaks in the accents of a Hellenistic Christian of the Lucan type. In ch22 he speaks as a Jewish Christian of the most primitive type...The most probable guess is that Ananias was an original Christian of the most primitive Jewish type...22 is nearer to the source, which has been Hellenised by Luke...In ch 26...he omitted this episode either because he knew that Paul himself refused to accept it or from a correct and artistic sense that it was unnecessary in a speech before Herod Agrippa.'*

The use of Jewish idiom by Ananias in 22;14 might well seem to offer a clue to a primitive source, but, alas, as Munck points out, it could also 'be shown that Ananias' words in chapter 22:14 were given a more Jewish turn in view of Paul's Jewish audience - a matter about which Luke must have been clear.' Here again is the typical dilemma of Lucan studies - are variations in style signs of the use of sources, or evidence of the literary skill of the author?

Frustrated in this direction, we can proceed to distinguish the wording of the speeches from the

* Beg v.p.191.

information contained in them. W.C. Van Unnik notes correctly that 'it cannot be deduced, from the mere fact that, like ancient historiographers generally, he puts into the mouths of his characters speeches which they were thought to have delivered on various occasions, that in matters of fact the content of these speeches has been invented.'* Van Unnik analysed the claim made by the Lucan Paul in Acts 22;3. 'I am a Jew born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers.' Van Unnik showed convincingly that there was in the ancient world a threefold formula: $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\iota\varsigma$ (birth), Nurture or upbringing ($\tau\rho\omicron\phi\acute{\eta}$) and education ($\piαιδεία$) and that Paul's words mean that he had been brought to Jerusalem from Tarsus in infancy. He offers a wealth of literary parallels to prove that this was indeed the Hellenistic formula, but this very proof also tells decisively against the speech being any kind of verbatim report, for Paul is supposed to be speaking in Aramaic. (22;2).

If we accept the factual assertions made in the speeches as reliable, but ascribe the wording to Luke, can we go further as to thought and literary allusion? Johannes Munck sought to identify, in the story of Paul's

* 'Tarsus of Jerusalem' p.35. See chapter 6.

conversion as given both in Acts and the Epistles, echoes of the Suffering Servant passages in Isaiah and the story of the call of Jeremiah. Thus Paul's statement in Gal. 1;15 that he had been called ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός reminds us of Isaiah 49;1 and Jeremiah 1;4. Munck claimed to go further and find allusions to these texts in the Acts account as well, 'and it is interesting that they remind one of these texts, but not of the same expressions in them. There seems to have existed a tradition of applying to Paul those Old Testament texts about a call: but taken in detail, they were not applied in the same way.'*

Thus for example, at 26;17, Christ promises Paul to be with him: ἔξαιρούμενός σε ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν

The Nestlé text here employs heavy type and indicates a reference to Jeremiah 1;17, while in the next verse the command to 'open their eyes' is related in the same way to the task of the Servant as stated in Isaiah 42;6.

Likewise the conversion account given in Acts 9;15 (not of course in a speech) contains the command to βαστάσαι τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐνώπιον τῶν ἐθνῶν τε καὶ βασιλέων, δίδω τε Ἰσραὴλ. which can be related to Jeremiah 1;10 ἰδοὺ καθέστακά σε σήμερον ἐπὶ ἔθνη καὶ ἐπὶ βασιλείας.

* Munck 26,27.

Moreover, in the shorter account in ch.22 Paul is told that he is to know God's will and be a witness - 'the text assumes here that Christ announced to Paul his will towards him, and therefore said something corresponding to his call to him in 26;16 - 18'. Munck felt able to conclude that 'the accounts in Acts go back to Paul, as they show a close connexion with the description in Galatians, not only in the narration of the previous history but also in the explanatory words. It is the apostle himself who shaped the story of his conversion and call as the churches were able to hear it.'*

Unfortunately the close reference to Jeremiah occurs only in ch 26, for the alleged parallel between 9;15 and Jeremiah 1;10 is hardly close enough to prove anything. But the parallel at 26;17 is certainly striking, and since Luke takes the trouble to tell the story of Paul's conversion three times, we may assume that he thought it of importance as a historical fact. Thus we may regard Paul's speeches to the mob (ch.22) and before Agrippa (26) as honest attempts by Luke to represent the line of defence that Paul adopted. But how close was he to fact in matters of detail? Any answer will depend to some extent on whether Luke is regarded as a

* *ibid.* p.29.

contemporary observer or a writer of the second generation. The speech before Felix, however, raises two of the most baffling problems of Acts: what happened to the great collection, and what was the dispute about the resurrection of the dead?

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS:

a) 'With respect to the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you this day.' (24;21)

Paul is represented as pursuing this line of argument before Felix, and somewhat cleverly, before the Sanhedrin at 23;6 - though he would certainly have been justified in employing his debating skills in so hostile an assembly. Did Paul really reason like this, or was he misrepresented by Luke for apologetic purposes? Was not the real dispute about the stumbling block of the cross- Christ Jesus and him crucified? Was the non-theological Festus right when he summed up the dispute as being about 'one Jesus, who was dead but whom Paul asserted to be alive?' (25;19)

Stress on the resurrection of the dead is certainly a Lucan emphasis, with some apologetic motive. It reappears in the speech before Agrippa; 'Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God should raise the dead?' (26;8). We feel no difficulty in supposing that Paul, Hebrew of the Hebrews, could have stood before the Sanhedrin and claimed to be a Pharisee.

(23;6)* No doubt too the resurrection faith was a key point in his message. But it is curious that in the great apologetic speeches, as indeed in the Areopagus address, there is reference to Christ risen and none to Christ crucified. Yet if, on the other hand, Luke wished to avoid stressing the 'scandal of the cross' why has he left it out here and retained it in the 'kerygmatic' parts of the earlier mission speeches? We are unable to decide how far Luke has departed from the real situation on this question; a possible motive could be the author's desire to show that the new faith was simply authentic Judaism and not a subversive movement. Such a motive could indicate personal involvement as well as second generation curiosity.

b) 'I came to my people bringing alms and offerings.'
(24;17)

Thus says Paul to Felix, and Acts does not answer the question: what happened to the offerings he was bringing? Romans 15 reveals a Paul confident yet anxious: 'I am going to Jerusalem with aid for the saints...strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judaea, and that my service to God may be acceptable to the saints, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy.' (Romans 15;25,31-32) That hope was not to be

* H.Chadwick: 'All things to all men' (NTS 1,1955,p255ff) notes that Paul was attacked from both sides as a 'trimmer'.

fulfilled.

What lies behind the guarded reference to the great collection of Acts 24:17—for such no doubt it is? When two sources agree as closely as do Romans 15 and Acts at this point, there can be little doubt. Taken in the context of the arrest of Paul, the silence of Acts must indicate that the 'offering of the saints' was a failure. Precisely what happened to it we cannot say: the very discretion with which Luke refers to it may indicate that he thought it a subject better left alone.*

* In 'St. Luke and the Church of Jerusalem' Prof. G. W. H. Lampe doubts 'if Luke mentions the real Pauline collection at all... Paul's statement before Felix that he had come to Jerusalem to give alms to his nation and offerings (Acts 24:17) may only refer to his Acts of Jewish piety in the temple'... It seems likely, as Haenchen suggests, that Luke ~~has~~ transferred into this setting.. (an approaching famine, predicted by Agabus) the material he found in his sources about the great Pauline collection for Jerusalem.' (p. 24)

We have argued that it is unreasonable to dismiss the 'famine relief' effort in view of the close corroboration provided by Jewish sources. Moreover, Romans 15 corresponds so closely to Acts 20, and Luke seems so well informed in the last eight chapters of Acts, that it is hard to believe that he really knew next to nothing about the great collection. It seems more likely that he knew more than he was prepared to say.

Thus we are glad to agree with Haenchen: 'The guard of honour' who accompany Paul at 20;4 (Sopater, Aristarchus, Gaius, Timothy and Trophimus) were really intended to guard and deliver the collection, 'but as Luke is silent about the collection here as well, the reader must regard these men as followers who travel with such a successful missionary as Paul.'* Luke's tactful silence, however, could as well indicate an author who had been painfully and personally involved in the collection affair himself, as a poorly-informed chronicler of a later age. After all, the 'guard of honour' included 'we'.

Does this admission open the door once again to 'Tubingen theories' both ancient and modern? Is Luke found out to be a tendentious reconciler of impossibles after all? Has he told the truth but not the whole truth? Or shall we with Loisy imagine a pure and primitive Luke whose work was ruined by the unscrupulous Redaktor? None of these extreme views are forced on us. It is not necessary to suppose that Paul's offering was spurned

* Bruce (p425) accepts Acts 24;17 as a reference to the collection. C.S.C.Williams remarks (p255) 'It is striking that Acts does not say more about this collection for the saints, which was constantly in Paul's heart.' Here surely is one occasion on which the argument from silence is valid.

by James and the Jewish Christian elders, or that they betrayed him to the Temple authorities: Luke's silence indicates only that the great collection did not succeed in cancelling the debt between Jewish and Gentile Christians: that was tragedy enough.

c) 'Let it be known to you that this salvation has been sent to the Gentiles: they will listen.' (28;28)

One further unanswered problem remains: it can hardly be doubted that the last words spoken by Paul in Acts represent a Lucan emphasis, if not a Lucan invention. The theme 'we turn to the Gentiles' occurs at 13;46,18;5 and 19;9. This last word from Paul, together with the last word from Luke - that Paul stayed in Rome 'quite openly and unhindered'* - surely indicates that the book as we have it is in finished form. If Luke ever planned a part 3 it would have been a separate work! But the comparative vagueness about Paul's stay in Rome is certainly curious. We need not doubt that here, as elsewhere, he sought to meet his fellow-Jews.. The rejection of Israel was a problem for Paul as for Luke, but for the former it was far more of a personal tragedy, as his passionate argument in Romans 9-11 illustrates. Paul was prepared to wish that he was under

* Bengel got the emphasis right: 'Victoria verbi dei. Paulus Romae, apex evangelii, actorum finis.' (quoted by Bruce p 481)

God's curse, and separated from Christ, so that Israel might live. (Romans 9;3) The author to Theophilus would hardly have said that. He was no Niemöller, no Bruckner de Villiers, wrestling personally with the strange destiny of the German or the Afrikaner people. Thus the historical Paul could hardly have spoken with the blunt finality of Acts 28;28. 'The Gentiles will listen' might have been his cry of desperation, but hardly his last word.

As to Luke's silence about Paul's death, Haenchen seems to be right once again. 'Paul and the other Christians had been put to death by Nero, and Nero's memory was condemned. A Neronian verdict did not bind the Roman state. The attempt...to point out the earlier attitude of the state...was not a futile one.'* But does the acute observation require us to imagine a Luke who had never known Paul, but wrote at the turn of the first century? Would not this line of apology be even more suited to a Luke who had been with Paul as a young man, and who wrote - or perhaps - planned - his narrative as early as the reign of Vespasian?

* H. 656.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION: A VERY HUMAN DOCUMENT

Any literary work offers us information of two kinds; about the ostensible subject - matter and about the author himself. To disentangle one from the other is the task of perceptive readers as well as of the professional critic. The writings of the New Testament are no exception to this obvious rule, and it need surprise nobody that the first historian of Christianity gave us a picture coloured in part by his own personality. Complete objectivity is, no doubt, an ideal beyond human attainment. But a large and perhaps unique cloud has always hung over the study of Christian origins. On these documents depends the vast fabric of a historical religion; for centuries they have carried (as Prof E.G.Rupp said happily of the Book of Common Prayer) 'the heavy burden of a people's prayers.'^{*} If they turn out to be unreliable, does the whole edifice collapse? What then of 'the believers of Naro-Fominsk... for forty years the people of this town have had no church, but they still live in hope...they are Orthodox, the same people as those who have found a spiritual stronghold in the church since time immemorial...the authorities, in disregard of the law, refuse their petitions.'^{**}

^{*} Six Masters of English Religion, p 52.

^{**} Letter from V.N.Chalidze to Metropolitan Pimen of Moscow, 26 Feb.1971, quoted in the 'Tablet' 22 May 1971.

Certainly bias is not confined to the believers, and if the people of Naro-Fominsk have managed without a church for forty years, they are not likely to be converted to atheism by the Biblical Criticism of the Soviet Encyclopedia, based on nothing better than the Christ-myth theory of Arthur Drews. Again, it is not only the study of Christian origins that is bedevilled by ideological commitment. One such contemporary issue is the racial and colonial question. Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, for example, was dismayed to think that 'we may neglect our own history and amuse ourselves with the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe... Perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little. There is only the history of the Europeans in Africa...'* When Professor Trevor-Roper first uttered these remarks publicly in 1963, schools in West Africa were in the process of changing from syllabus and textbooks in which the British Empire was definitely regarded as a 'good thing' to syllabus and textbooks in which pre-colonial Africa was a good thing and the

* H. Trevor-Roper: The Rise of Christian Europe. p.9.

British Empire a brief and perhaps regrettable interlude.* Again, the racial question has now become so explosive that sexual rude words are permitted on the mass media, racial rude words are banned. Dickens would be lucky to get away with Fagin nowadays, and Shakespeare, if it was Shakespeare, would certainly not get away with Aaron the Moor in 'Titus Andronicus'.**

No doubt a balanced view on the colonial epoch will be established in the end. No corner of the globe is ultimately irrelevant: 'very little' history is not the same as 'none', and historians may gyrate as well as tribesmen. We are glad to agree with Prof. Trevor-Roper's dictum that 'Historians...should study the

* On the question of school history books see 'The Historian's Contribution to Anglo-American Misunderstanding,' ed. R.A. Billington. This amusing analysis of textbooks both in the U.S.A. and in England and Wales, reveals many and subtle kinds of bias: sins both of omission and commission. The American textbook writers do not get very far in the Quest for the Historical George III, while an English writer who calls George Washington 'unbeatable' is less generous than he seems. If George Washington was unbeatable that explains why the usually invincible British failed to win.

** Shakespeare was, as usual, ahead of his time on the race question. See 'Othello's Countrymen' by J. Eldred Jones.

process of history and not merely the detail of the narrow sector in which, perforce, they specialise: and if this means that they must occasionally trespass into less familiar sectors, they must be prepared for the consequences.'* This comment seems relevant to New Testament studies, and so we have attempted to look at the Acts of the Apostles in the broader context of ancient literature. There have been persistent gyrations in the reputation of Acts; it has been regarded as a work of the highest veracity and dismissed as a distortion by an unscrupulous Redaktor. Its author has been pictured as a layman with little interest in theology, and then notably in recent years, presented as a theologian of original genius. Since that author was also the first to attempt an account of Christian beginnings it is worth asking where, on the graph of historical time past, his work may reasonably be placed.

Our study has suggested two traps for the wayfaring student to avoid. The first is the short cut of overconfident reconstruction. Our sources are so fragmentary, the gaps in our knowledge are so great, that any too dogmatic attempt at finality is likely to come to grief. Prof. John Knox has written with poignancy about E.J.Goodspeed's theory concerning Ephesians: '(Goodspeed) believed that he was presenting virtual proof of his

* Trevor-Roper, op.cit.p.7.

hypothesis. He was literally full of his idea, convinced both of its validity and of its great importance for the understanding of how early Christian literature developed...He was quite sure at the time that he had made a significant discovery, and that New Testament studies would thenceforth be different because of it. It belongs to the pathos of life and history that in fact this idea of his had little continuing influence.'*

The same fate has overtaken many another confident account of the careers of Paul, Peter and the rest. Is it legitimate to assume that Paul arrived at Corinth humiliated by his failure to persuade the philosophers at Athens, and thereupon resolved henceforth to know nothing but Christ and him crucified? Was the great collection really of eschatological significance as Johannes Munck suggests? What really happened at the Council of Jerusalem? Such conundrums may never be solved in this life: 'It will be a great comfort at the Day of Judgement to find out the truth about the Gowrie Conspiracy.'

It must therefore be conceded that the first less than adequate reconstruction was that of Luke himself, and that later scholars have but followed in his footsteps. F.T.Wainwright has well said: 'However pleased

*Acts and the Pauline Letter Corpus: John Knox in SLA
p 279-280.

we are with some of our syntheses, we should do well to remember that we cannot at best achieve more than a rough approximation to the truth, a simplified version of events and conditions to a great extent beyond recall. After every conclusion we should do well to write: 'It was more complicated than that'.*

Yet while disastrous short cuts must be shunned on the one hand, there is no need to fall into the Slough of Despond of undue scepticism either. Professor Wainwright has himself cast much light on an obscure subject in editing 'The Problem of the Picts', and combines documentary and archaeological information in elucidating the story of that elusive Dark Age people. 'An excursion into conjecture is perhaps the best way to emphasise the fundamental importance of establishing reliable equations between historical, linguistic and other conceptions.' To say that the Picts are mysterious is not to say that they were non-existent or entirely beyond rediscovery.

Before Agamemnon?

Yet one cannot equate the study of Christian origins with the problem of the Picts. For the latter there is hardly any documentary evidence at all. Prof. Wainwright has written of King Brude that his 'successors, like himself, are mentioned from time to time in the Irish chronicles, which puts their historicity beyond

* Approaches to History, ed. H.P.R. Finberg, p220-221.

a doubt...We must for the present regard both section 1 and 2 of the Pictish Chronicle as fictitious and legendary. Section 3 seems to be historical in respect of the last 30 or so of its 60 kings, that is from about Brude Mac Maelchon whose name appears halfway down this section of the list.*

But the history which begins with King Brude (or thereabouts) is slight enough. All that historicity amounts to is the acceptance that monarchs bearing the names listed once existed. For the rest the Picts, and still more the clans who preceded them, remain in the category memorably established by Horace, who declared, more generously than Professor Trevor-Roper, that strong men lived before Agamemnon.**

No doubt linguistics, archaeology, and the study of oral tradition can help to recover something of the personality and culture of such forgotten people. But the New Testament period does not come into this category: we are dealing, not with prehistory, but with

* F.T.Wainwright: The Problem of the Picts p.17-18.

** Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
multi: sed omnes illacrimabiles
urgentur ignotique longa
nocte, carent quia vate sacro.
Horace: Odes 4;9;28.

a period for which written and archaeological evidence provides definite if limited information.* The problem of New Testament studies is not that we are dealing with remote prehistory, or that written evidence is lacking, but that our very definite and valuable documentary evidence is fragmentary; with Paul, Pilate and Jesus of Nazareth we are always 'so near and yet so far'.

After Agamemnon?

Nor can the New Testament material be equated with heroic lay and epic song. From this indeed much of historical value can be obtained. To confine ourselves

* The value of oral traditions among non-literate peoples is interestingly discussed by J.Vansina: Oral Tradition: notably with reference to the Eastern Congo. After a study of much relevance to the question of oral transmission of New Testament material, he concludes: 'What the historian can do is to arrive at some approximation to the ultimate historical truth. He does this by using calculations of probability, by interpreting the facts and by evaluating them in an attempt to recreate for himself the circumstances which existed at certain given moments in the past. And here the historian using oral traditions finds himself on exactly the same level as historians using any other kind of historical material. No doubt he will arrive at a lower degree of probability than would otherwise be attained, but that does not rule out the fact that what he is doing is valid, and that it is history.'

to European literature only, we encounter in 'Beowulf' for example, numerous allusive references to military leaders of the Germanic Dark Ages, as baffling to scholars as they were obvious to the original listeners who were familiar with the tradition. To reconstruct the Council of Jerusalem is no more conjectural than to decide the truth about the fight at Finnesburh, dependent as the latter is on incidental references in Beowulf, and on a transcript of a single leaf, now lost, in the Lambeth Library. Yet that there was a fight, and that 'sudden calamity overwhelmed the sons of Finn', admits of no reasonable doubt.

Again, Sir Ifor Williams did not hesitate to deduce the historicity of the primal Welsh poet Aneirin from the collection of lays which bear his name.* And if this be thought an act of Celtic piety by a scholar concerned, by publishing in Welsh, to maintain the cause of the Cymry against the Saxon, let it be noted that Prof. K.H.Jackson writes of the late sixth century bard: 'This testimony to the real existence and date of Aneirin, in an author, writing early in the ninth century, is of the first importance.'**

Clearly the New Testament evidence is not of

* Canu Aneirin: Cardiff 1938.

** K.H.Jackson: Gododdin: The oldest Scottish poem
p 24-25.

this kind. Oral tradition certainly played its part in the transmission of the sayings of Jesus, and in the Acts of the Apostles elements of the saga-form certainly appear; but the author to Theophilus did not impose the saga-form on his material. Rather did certain characteristics of the saga-form, like heroic simplification, lack of circumstantial detail, and polarisation of moral attitudes, remain in some of the material which he has attempted to deal with as a historian.

One must remember that the New Testament deals neither with pre-history nor with epic traditions, if the scales are to be fairly balanced when its credibility is considered. Apart from the fragmentary nature of the evidence the major problem is one of ideological bias. Vast vested interests of emotion and commitment are bound up in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, and the New Testament writers, who composed their accounts from the standpoint of faith, were certainly one-sided and had good grounds to play down anything unfavourable to their cause. But the argument works both ways; none has yet attempted to prove that the bard Amrein was the expression of the cult of a sacred

mushroom.* If the early Christian tried to shift the guilt for the death of Jesus from Romans to Jews, it turns out to be Jewish scholars who are concerned to transfer it back again.**

Consider for example the case of Pilate's hesitation. T.A.Burkill has criticised Sherwin-White's defence of the basic historicity of the gospel version of the trial of Jesus. 'These narratives are theological interpretations, all of which contain at least some details which could not have factually occurred...the

* Mythical features are certainly found in the careers of many folk-heroes. Some have supposed that Hengest and Horsa were simply, as their names imply, Stallion and Mare. The red-cloaked Sir Gawain has been thought to be the expression of a solar myth. Again one must insist that the New Testament material is not of this kind. Luke's account of the virgin birth, for example, is a much more sober one than that which Philostratus gives of the birth of Apollonius of Tyana, whose mother was surrounded by swans as she slept in a meadow, and thereupon gave birth.

(Life of Apollonius, 1;5)

** Paul Winter: On the trial of Jesus.

passion story tends to transfer guilt for the death of Jesus from Romans to Jews!*

But to concede this point is by no means to dismiss the story of Pilate's reluctance to condemn Jesus as an apologetic invention. Edward Norden felt able to write: 'Pontius Pilate - we mean the historical Pilate, and not the Pilate who in the gospels is already enveloped in a veil of incipient and tendentious legend-proved himself, in the course of his term of office, an irritable, brusque and masterful official, who sought rather than avoided conflicts, but was confident and energetic like his master in Rome.'**

Other information we can discover about Pilate, outside the New Testament, is in fact the following:

1) He tried to introduce into Jerusalem 'by night and under cover the effigies of Caesar which are called standards' (BJ:ii:169) In the face of overwhelming Jewish opposition Pilate gave way.

2) He attempted to use money from the temple treasury to construct an aqueduct; the crowd of protesters around his tribunal was attacked by troops in plain clothes and some were killed. (BJ ii,170)

* B Vawter quoted by T.A.Burkill, Novum Testamentum, Vol xii, fasc.4, p 342.

** Norden: Kleine Schriften, p.244. 'Josephus und Tacitus über Christus.'

3) He set up 'gilded shields in Herod's palace in the holy city.' Protest letters were sent to Tiberius, who angrily ordered Pilate to take the shields back to Caesarea. (According to Philo; Embassy to Gaius:30 (299-306).*

In each of these three incidents we meet a colonial official in conflict with the native population, and in the first and the third at least he is compelled to give way. This is precisely the situation presented by the gospels. Pilate may well have been quite ready to say 'Off with his head' - but not necessarily as soon as he was requested to do so by the Sanhedrin. The whole psychology of the colonial situation, the requirements of military security, as well as the prestige of Rome, would require that he should take time to look into the case himself, and thus check the excesses of the corrupt and irrational Native Authority. In theory at least Pilate's job was to 'parcere subjectis et debellare superbos' and the evidence of Philo and Josephus tallies perfectly with the gospel's claim that

* It has been suggested that the 'shields' incident is a doublet of the 'standards' affair, but E.M.Smallwood shows in her edition of the 'Embassy' that this is not likely. The point about the shields was that they carried no image of Caesar, but even so they had to be withdrawn.

he sentenced Jesus as a result of popular pressure. The threat of an appeal to Caesar is apparent in both bodies of evidence. It is not clear how Norden could be sure that the 'real' Pilate was 'masterful' when he had to back down on two of the three occasions when he appears in the pages of Philo and Josephus. But perhaps this was less obvious when Norden published his essay in 1913, for at that time there was a 'confident and energetic master' in Berlin, and the dissident Herero had been driven into the Kalahari desert.

Thus a comparison of the New Testament Pilate with the Pilate of Josephus and Philo shows that is the Christian tradition 'played up' his reluctance to condemn Jesus, it is most unlikely to have been invented.

A similar middle-of-the-road critical stance seems to us reasonable with regard to the Book of Acts as well. It could be that New Testament scholarship is in danger of wandering into the slough of despond, and that recent excessive emphasis on the theological side of Luke's work is the result of a failure of nerve: a kind of compensation for the abandonment of the quest for real factuality behind the documents. The present work, no doubt one-sided also, has sought to offer as a corrective a more optimistic estimate of the historical reliability of the Acts narrative. A good example of such scepticism is Conzelmann's estimate of the 'we'

passages: 'The only certainty is that they are intended to give the impression of an eye-witness.'* But with what motive? Acts is not a Hellenistic romance like those of Achilles Tatius or Chariton - for all their common vocabulary - and a reasonable presumption would be that they not only give the impression of an eye-witness, but indicate the actual presence of one. To quote A.D.Nock: 'I know of only one possible parallel for the emphatic use of a questionable 'we' outside literature which is palpably fictional. Further, we read in Luke 1;3, which is the foreword of the two volumes, that the writer had followed from far back the whole course of the things which have been accomplished among us'; this is an explicit assertion of contact with the Christian movement in its early days: It goes beyond the assertion implicit in 'we'; since on stylistic grounds the hypothesis of a redaktor is excluded, I think we must take these statements at their face

* 'Sicher ist nur, dass durch das 'Wir' der Eindruck der Augenzeugenschaft erweckt werden soll. Verg. die Persiflage in Lucian's Wahren Geschichten.' (HNT p6)
Surely one must also compare the 'we' pronoun as it appears in other less 'palpably fictional' works than those of Lucian.!

value.*

It may well be that the contacts of Luke with Paul were not long or intimate: 'beloved' is a word which Paul used freely...It was some thirty years after the point where 'we' starts, and it was when others had chronicled the things to do with Jesus, that Luke embarked on his two-volume work.**

No doubt the identity of the author of Acts will continue to be disputed, and perhaps it does not matter very much, but it would seem necessary to maintain that Acts, and indeed Luke-Acts, should be regarded as history first and theology second. The Lucan

* The linguistic implications of the 'I' of the preface and its connection with the 'we' of Acts was noted by Cadbury in 'The knowledge claimed in Luke's preface' (Expositor, Vol XXIV p 401) His analysis of the participle with parallels from Demosthenes, indicates that 'the writer is claiming first hand contemporary knowledge'. With characteristic caution Cadbury refrained from drawing the conclusion that the author was a companion of Paul, though this would seem to be the implication of his precise linguistic argument.

One may well ask whether the general reader who perused Luke-Acts would not reasonably suppose that the 'I' of the preface and the 'we' of Acts were one and the same person.

** Nock, p.502-3.

narrative is certainly a simplification of the events - 'it was more complicated than that' - it may be regarded as an essay in theological history, but 'dogma has not overcome history' in the sense that it made the author adopt a cavalier attitude in matters of fact. Analysis shows Luke to have been, within the canons of Hellenistic historiography, a painstaking, if amateur historian.

Heinrici rightly compared him to Dio Cassius: 'Like the latter, Luke carefully assembles facts; and both honestly believe in the signs and wonders which they record. Dio's method also reminds us of Luke's, in that he describes his experiences under Commodus in the first person.'*

But then Heinrici was a believer in the 'non-theological' Luke: 'The tone of the Acts of the Apostles - more historical than edifying (erbaulich) - provides the reason why, in the patristic period, it awoke less interest than all the other books of the New Testament.'

Once again one wonders why the theological profundities of Luke were not perceived until the twentieth century, and then not by the rank and file of believers.

* Heinrici: Der litterarische Charakter der N.T.Schriften - p 69. The comparison with Dio is surely a fairer one than with Lucian. Clearly the latter had his tongue in his cheek when he offered a 'true' history.

Prof. H.W.Turner has analysed the favourite texts used in the preaching of a West African church. For the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Acts comes 30th in the table of Biblical Books, ahead only of such minor contenders as 2 Thessalonians, Titus, Jude, 3 John, 2 John and Philemon. Professor Turner writes that 'the position of the Acts of the Apostles almost at the bottom of the N.T.list is due to its nature primarily as a historical narrative, with little formulated moral and religious teaching of the kind that appeals to the Church of the Lord...the book is no more popular here than it was in the early Christian church...'* Thus if Acts was intended primarily as an edifying discourse, it would seem that believers who enjoy edification have been very slow to realise what they are missing.

There is one other reason why a just appreciation of Luke the historian is necessary at the present time. The writings of the third evangelist have often been recognised as the stronghold of humanitarian values in the New Testament. It has often been noted that the third gospel emphasises the concern of Jesus for women, for the outcast, for Samaritans and for the poor. Hoskyns and Davey suggested * that 'Luke...did not intend to give this humanitarian impression', which resulted from

* See Additional Note number 10.

** The Riddle of the New Testament p.95-96.

his editorial simplifications of Mark. 'It is an almost intolerable critical procedure to fix upon this editorial simplification, and to announce that there we have the Jesus of history, which modern criticism has unearthed.' This is a valid point, but it overlooks the fact that Luke alone has recorded two 'shocking' parables: the Clever Rascal (16;1-9) and the Importunate Widow (18;1-8). Perhaps the 'teaching peculiar to Luke' affords some insight into the collector's mind: and here we note the three parables of ch.15: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. These, together with the good Samaritan in ch.10, show us an author whose mind was humanitarian in that it displayed a genuine concern for human beings for their own sake: the same concern, we suggest, appears in the varied portrait gallery of Acts. Luke was 'humanitarian' not because he smoothed away the angularities of Mark: he was humanitarian because historical.

It is more than a failure of nerve, it is a betrayal of the author's profoundest insights, to read Luke's narrative as an allegory or a treatise in systematic theology. For the 'human interest' values of Luke-Acts are sorely needed both in the contemporary church and the secular world. Prof. Richard Hoggart has thus analysed the ethos of the sex-and-violence novel: 'In the world of gangster-fiction there can be no happy endings, nor any endings which are really beginnings,

attempts to start life by staying in the same spot... it seems probable that the cheap sex-fiction has developed in the way illustrated because our great cities have become more crowded, and because a sense of direction have become harder to find in them...This is the popular literature of the empty megalopolitan world..' At a profounder level the poet Edwin Muir wrote in his Autobiography: 'I discovered in Italy that Christ had walked on earth and also that things truly made preserve themselves through time in the first freshness of their nature. 'On this Dame Helen Gardner commented; 'The primary historical imagination is that by which we know human beings and human experience and contemplate them and it seriously. If this is weak and scorned, attempts to understand how men once thought, and to recreate the past imaginatively, degenerate into mere antiquarianism on the one hand, and a reduction of individual human minds to schematic ways of thought on the other.'*

'I cannot feel satisfied with a literary criticism which substitutes for the conception of the writer as ' a man speaking to men ' the conception of the writer as an imagination weaving symbolic patterns to be teased out by the intellect, and in its concentration on the work by itself ends by finding significance in what the work suggests than in what it says...It is the first responsibility of an interpreter that he should

* The Business of Criticism; p.125-126.

neither disregard nor damage that first freshness with which things made by long-dead men speak directly to the mind and heart.'

To the present generation the author of Luke-Acts 'a man speaking to men'*, has his own message of humanity to convey.

* 'A poet...is a man speaking to men; a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind.' A fair description of the author to Theophilus?

(Wordsworth: Preface the Lyrical Ballads: in Wordsworth's Literary Criticism, ed.N.C.Smith,p.23)

ADDITIONAL NOTE 1. (see p. 158)

THE MOTIVATION OF 3 MACCABEES.

Kautzsch notes the suggestion that 3 Macc aims to prove the loyalty of the Jews to the Ptolemaic house. According to Ewald: 'wollte der Verfasser durch die Fassung und Ausprägung seiner Erzählung erweisen, dass die Jü["]der in Egypten immer gute Unterthanen waren und so von den Ptole["]mäern viele Ehren, Rechte und Freiheiten sich erwarben' (Kautzsch: Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen 1;120) This would imply a similar 'political' motive apologetic to that of Acts. Ewald thought that the book was written in connection with the attempted sacrilege by Caligula in A.D.41. Certainly the apologetic in 3 Macc is not directed towards the Ptolemies! As against the proposed link with Caligula's plan to desecrate the temple, however, we must set the 'triumphalist' tone of the whole book. There is none of the personal anguish that is heard in the writings of Philo, and one doubts if the author had known persecution himself.

The motif of including all possible atrocities in one narrative recalls the German novelist's Grimmelshausen's descriptions of the Thirty Years War. 'The novelist, though he had experienced some of the incidents described in his book, naturally allowed himself a certain license in the compilation of his story. One critic has pointed out a suspicious likeness between one of his scenes and a picture by Callot showing the

same subject - the plundering of a farmhouse. Both of these are set pieces in which every form of atrocity is shown happening at the same moment. There is, however, evidence enough to show that all these things happened, though not all in the same place or on the same day.' C.V.Wedgwood:: The Thirty Years War; p228.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 2. (See page 362)

SUSPENDED JUDGEMENTS

On the view taken here some questions must remain open: these include the enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria (Luke 2;1) as well as the precise truth about Paul's visits to Jerusalem and the Apostolic Council. Certainly our picture would be more complicated and more accurate if we had more documents to study - but that does not mean that we should refuse to regard as real people, who did what Acts says they did, Julius of the Augustan cohort, Publius the Chief Man of Malta, and Philip's four daughters who prophesied. Likewise we may take it as true that Agabus bound himself with a belt, that James the brother of John was killed with the sword, and that the brethren came to meet Paul at the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns.

It certainly looks as if a mistake was made about Judas and Theudas - unless we adopt the expedient of F.F.Bruce and suppose that there was more than one Theudas (Bruce p147) For this it can at least be said

that there was, it seems, more than one Sanballat in the post-exilic period. This has now become evident from the Samaritan papyri, about which R. Davidson writes: 'Of great interest is the reference to Sanballat as governor of Samaria, when Alexander the Great invaded Syria. This cannot be the Sanballat known to us from Nehemiah's memoirs as governor of Samaria in the latter part of the fifth century. (cf Nehemiah 4ff) It looks as if under the Persians more than one Sanballat held office as governor of Samaria. The name was probably, as is common practise, handed down from grandfather to grandson. This must lead to a revision of sceptical attitudes concerning a Sanballat as governor of Samaria when Alexander the Great invaded Syria. (cf. Ant. XI; 302)'

Thus new documents may complicate the picture, but not necessarily destroy the credibility of the documents we have already. Might not future historians reasonably conclude, for example, that the Pakistan refugee relief effort of 1971 is a 'doublet' of the flood relief effort of 1970?

If there was more than one Sanballat there could have been more than one Theudas (=Theodorus). But a mistake by Luke, not Gamaliel, seems more likely at Acts 5; 36-37; as Trocmé remarks: 'Le petit problème... n'a plus aucune importance dès qu'on admet que Luc a composé lui-même la harangue qu'il prête à Gamaliel.' (Trocmé p. 193)
(See Davidson and Leaney: The Penguin Guide to Modern Theology. Vol. 3; p. 69.)

ADDITIONAL NOTE 3. (see page 401)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL DETAILS.

Our argument here may seem paradoxical, as though the vagueness of Luke's account may be thought an indication of his reliability as an historian! Yet this is what we do wish to maintain. Luke could have invented names of Samaritan villages if he wanted to add spurious verisimilitude to his narrative. The fact that he did not do so here may give us more confidence in his story when such circumstantial details appear - for example - the lecture hall of Tyrannus 19;9. It is often debated whether the presence of circumstantial details tends to imply historicity or the lack of it. Our point is that a literary analysis of Luke's methods shows that he was a sober worker who 'stuck to his last'. If you are going to invent vivid details you might as well invent them all the way through. The same argument applies to his gospel. Martha and Mary lived in 'a village' (Lk.10;38) There was trouble in 'a village of the Samaritans' (9;52) Jesus was praying in 'a certain place' (11;1). If Luke lacked source material he does not attempt to hide it. We are glad to agree with Conzelmann:(TSL p34) "There is no unrestrained symbolism in Luke: only what is in his opinion a historical event can possess genuine typological meaning." Only Luke as we read him was more concerned with 'human interest' than with typology.

ADDITIONAL NOTE NO.4. (see page 409)

SEMITISMS AND THE ANTIOCH SOURCE.

Wilcox (p157 - 179) seeks to identify a) source material in the speeches. b) kerygmatic or credal elements, and c) Semitisms proper. The speeches are discussed in chapter 9. As an example of 'kerygmatic' formulae we may take Acts 10:40-41, where Peter's claim 'that Christ appeared' to us..who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead,' coincides almost verbally with Ignatius: Smyrn.3:3...The chances are that both are drawing on a common piece of tradition. 'The Semitisms proper''are practically all found in Acts 1-15, and within these limits they are distributed as follows:' (Here we quote Wilcox and add the abbreviations HAS= Harnack's Antioch Source JAS= Jeremias' Antioch Source)

Acts 1 : 4	8: 39)	Philip.
1 : 19	8: 40)	
2 : 1	9: 2	JAS) Conversion
2 : 3	9: 36	JAS) of Paul.
2 : 14	9: 40	JAS)
2 : 47	10: 19)
3 : 2	10:38 (Dc)) Peter.
3 : 14 ??	12: 6 (D)	HAS JAS)
4 : 10	13: 11 (D)	HAS JAS) First
4 : 12	13: 28b(D)	HAS JAS) Journey
4 : 13	13: 19b	HAS JAS)
5 : 26(D.Text)	13: 38	HAS JAS)
6 : 11 HAS JAS)	13: 45b	HAS JAS)
6 : 13 HAS JAS)	13: 47 ?	HAS JAS)
7 : 52(D) HAS JAS)	14: 2 (D)	HAS JAS)
7 : 53 HAS JAS)	14:10 ?	HAS JAS)
8 : 2 HAS JAS)	14:21	HAS JAS)
8 :10) Philip.	15: 2(D) ?	HAS) Council.
8 : 22)	15: 7	HAS)

ADDITIONAL NOTE 5 (See page 415)

THE COMPOSITION OF SPEECHES

It was during the eighteenth century that the custom of composing speeches lost its respectability. Isaac Voss supported the practice, while Voltaire and d'Alembert were opposed. The latter declared: 'Aujourd'hui l'on renverrait aux amplifications de Collège un historien qui remplirait son ouvrage de harangues.' R.C.Jebb, who recorded this comment, added that 'the spirit of scientific criticism has now banished it (the composition of speeches) from history and has relegated it to its proper sphere in the realm of historical romance.' He added that the insertion of fictional speeches 'maintained itself longest in Italy' because 'the practice was thoroughly suited to the Italian genius' !!! (Hellenica, ed.E.Abbott, p.289). An interesting discussion of the ethics of speech-writing was presented by 'the most learned and ingenious' (? ingenious) Jesuit Father Le Moyne, published in English in 1694, with the rather forbidding title: 'Of the Art both of writing and judging of history, with reflections upon Ancient as well as Modern historians, shewing through what defects there are so few good, and that it is impossible that there should be many so much as Tolerable'.

The anonymous translator, who assured his readers that 'the translating of this incomparable Discourse

out of French is not the effect of any Criminal Correspondence with the Enemies of the present government' - used the term 'harangues' - no doubt a literalism - to translate the chapter in which Le Moyne defended the composition of speeches: 'Harangues are necessary in History: not contrary to truth nor probability.' 'Are ambassadors accused of falsehood that express themselves more elegantly than their instructions?...' 'Tis then a calumny to say that the truth of history is violated by the resemblance in harangues.' (p172) Yet Le Moyne (who felt the critical wind beginning to blow against 'harangues') most extraordinarily found fault with Thucydides over the funeral oration: 'a long Mournful Harangue made by Pericles at the funeral of the fifteen gentlemen that died in the service of the republick: was not this to expose the second Jupiter of the Athenians (so Pericles was called) to abuse his lightnings and thunders, employing them in so mean a matter?...' However, the Funeral of the fifteen soldiers might have been made with less expense, and the mournful oration employed the Obsequies of those Athenians lost in Sicily in greater numbers and with greater glory. But Pericles was then dead and there never was another Orator to whom the Historian could lend his eloquence.' Such was critical taste in the age of Louis XIV !

This book also lists other works available in 1698 'at Grays Inn Gate in Holbourn...and against the exchange in Cornhill.' The bookseller's varied list included Aesop, the Genuine Epistles of Ignatius, 'Eight volumes of letters writ by a Turkish spy, who lived Forty-five years undiscovered at Paris', and two works by Sir George MacKenzie: 'Reason-an Essay' and 'The moral history of frugality'. The author is MacKenzie of Rosehaugh, the persecutor of the Lord's people and 'bluidy MacKenzie' of covenanting tradition. We have followed Auerbach in noting that the saga-form oversimplifies and resolves a complicated historical situation into an elemental clash between the principles of good and bad. The evil minded persecutor was not the monster pictured by his victims, who did not realise that the dragoons were set on them by the author of 'Reason-an Essay'. But the folk tradition has its own valid truth for all that. MacKenzie's policy, and that of the government he represented, were 'bluidy' enough, and the Covenanters did not get the chance to peruse 'The moral history of Frugality' before being shot..

ADDITIONAL NOTE 6. (See page 431)

ANCIENT SHORTHAND.

F.F.Bruce writes with confidence (p377): 'The address to the Ephesian elders is different in style and content from all other speeches in Acts..Almost certainly Luke heard it himself (c.f.xxi:1) and may even have taken shorthand notes. It is rich in parallels to the Pauline epistles' (Bruce lists these) but that it is not a mere cento of extracts from these is fairly clear from the fact that the author of Acts shows no sign of acquaintance with Paul's epistles.' This view contradicts that of Morton S. Enslin (ZMW, Vol 61,p253-271) who argues that Luke knew Paul's letters after all. But the strongest argument for regarding the Miletus speech as closest to the historical Paul is this: if you know the Pauline corpus of letters and want to add verisimilitude to your narrative, why not introduce echoes of the style of Paul's letters into his speeches all the way through? Why do these Pauline turns of phrase appear at Miletus only and not at Pisidian Antioch? Enslin conjectures that 'Luke refrained from any mention of Paul's habit (of writing letters) because the letters were already being turned to an improper use by unorthodox opponents.' This is to build conjecture on conjecture: much more likely is that Luke did not cite the letters because they were not available to him. The Miletus speech is also the

only one addressed to Christians, and its tone, together with Paul's reply to Agabus, (20;13) is very close indeed to the guarded anxiety of Romans 16:30-32)

Luke the Stenographer is dismissed by Haenchen: 'Greek shorthand was not heard of till about AD 150 (p39). Against this the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Vol 20, p576) records that a system of shorthand (notae) was invented in 63 B.C. by Tiro, a freedman of Cicero. Moreover 'an inscription on a marble slab from the Acropolis at Athens, attributed to the fourth century, indicates that a system of brief writing was practised among the Greeks.' It seems that Tiro's system held the field until the appearance of Pitman. Moreover the Encyclopedia tantalisingly notes further: 'With the rise of the Christian church and a demand for the exact utterances of the religious leaders of the day, the teaching and practise of the Tironian notae received fresh impetus. Many of the trials of the early Christians were reported by shorthand writers who were employed by the church for that purpose.'

Tiro, however, was a Latin-speaker, and 'examples of Greek shorthand are confined to a few fragmentary papyri and waxen tablets ranging from the 4th to the 8th century.' Thus there is no certainty about the origin of Greek shorthand, though the discovery of Linear B should deter anyone from jumping to premature conclusions!

It is of course improbable that anyone bothered

to keep a verbatim record of Paul's addresses, but the possibility that someone made notes of his remarks at Miletus cannot be ruled out. Love for the man they might never see again would be a sufficient motive. Nor are we impressed by the argument that a travel-diary could not have survived the shipwreck of Acts 27. Quite apart from Julius Caesar swimming 200 yards with notes in mouth, the text indicates that all survived the wreck: vital personal documents - like passports and 'letters of recommendation' would well survive also.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 7 (See page 432)

PETER IN LUKE'S GOSPEL .

Peter is a prominent speaker in the gospel as well:

- a) He says 'Depart from me...' on the occasion of the miraculous catch (5:8 - This unique to Luke's gospel).
- b) He says 'Master, the multitudes press on you...' when the sick woman touches the hem of the Lord's garment (8:45). This answer is ascribed to 'the disciples' in Mk.5:31, and in Luke the rendering depends on p75 and B.
- c) Peter confesses Jesus as Christ (9:20 - so also Matt 16:16 and Mark 8:29)
- d) Peter proposes to build three booths after the transfiguration. (9:33 = Mk 9:5 and Matt.17:4)
- e) Peter asks: 'Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?' (12:41 - no parallels) in reply to the parable of the thief in the night.
- f) Peter points out that the disciples 'have left our homes and followed you'. (18:28 = Mk 10:28 = Matt.19:27)

g) Peter says: 'Lord I am ready to go with you to prison and death. (22:33 = Mk 14:29 and Mt.26-33, with variations)

h) Peter denies Jesus three times (22:54-71=Mk.14:53-72 and Matt 26:57-75) Luke omits the detail given at Mk.14:71, that 'Peter began to invoke a curse upon himself and to swear', while Matt. retains it.

Thus Peter's role as spokesman is not greatly over-emphasised by Luke. He found it in the tradition and no doubt it corresponded broadly to fact. His chief addition is in the word 'Depart from me...' at 5:8, in a story which seems to be another 'keynote incident' based on Mark's account of the call of the disciples. (Mk 1:16-20) He omits the realistic detail of Peter's invoking a curse on himself, no doubt for the sake of ecclesiastical decency.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 8 (See page 432)

TRANSLATING AUERBACH

The writer was able to study the English edition of 'Mimesis' only after the present work was completed. Auerbach's distinction between 'Sage' and 'Geschichte' we have rendered as 'saga' and 'history'. The original of the passage quoted on p432 reads:

'Selbst da, wo sich die Sage nicht sogleich durch Elemente des Wunderbaren, durch Wiederholung bekannter Motive, durch Vernachlässigung örtlichen und zeitlichen Bedingungen oder ähnliches sofort verrät, ist sie doch meist an ihrem Aufbau schnell zu erkennen. Sie verläuft übermäßig glatt....'

Die Sage ordnet den Stoff in eindeutiger Weise, sie schneidet ihn aus den sonstigen Weltzusammenhang heraus, so dass dieser nicht verwirrend eingreifen kann, und sie kennt nur eindeutig festgelegte, von wenigen einfachen Motiven bestimmte Menschen, die in der Ungebrochenheit ihres ["]Fühlens und Handelns nicht beeinträchtigt werden. (Mimesis p.24)

This is rendered by W.R.Trask (Mimesis-English Ed, Princeton 1953) as follows:

'Even where the legendary does not immediately betray itself by elements of the miraculous, by the repetition of well-known standard motives, typical patterns and themes, through neglect of clear details of time and place and the like, it is generally quickly recognisable by its composition. It runs far too smoothly...

Legend arranges its material in a simple and straightforward way: it detaches it from its contemporary historical context so that the latter will not confuse it: it knows only clearly outlined men who act from few and simple motives and the continuity of whose feelings and actions remain uninterrupted.' (p19)
On this it may be said

1) The word 'Sage' is linked etymologically with the word 'to say' and implies oral transmission. Thus the oldest extant Germanic poem - the Hildebrandslied - begins 'Ik gihorta dat seggan' (Älteste Deutsche Dichtungen, Insel Verlag, 1953, p.8. The sagas par

excellence are the old Norse Epics, and much of what they tell us really happened. Thus, whatever was the precise truth about Eric the Red and Leif the Lucky, the vikings certainly got to North America.

2) In English a 'legend' is a story of something that never really happened. 'Legendary' is the antithesis of 'historical'. To say that King Arthur is legendary is to say that he never existed, or at least that the historical Arthur was quite unlike the figure presented by Sir Thomas Malory.

The term 'legend' need not be in oral form; the word in fact derives from the latin 'legenda' things read - via Old French.

3) The term 'Sage' therefore, implies both oral transmission and a lesser degree of historicity. But we do not understand Auerbach to deny all factual content to the category of 'Sage',. When he refers to 'Sagen' of martyrs in which 'a stiff-necked and fanatical persecutor stands over against an equally stiff-necked and fanatical victim', these are not 'legends' in the sense that neither persecutor nor victim ever existed. Whether you believe in 'bonny Dundee' or 'bluidy Clavers' depends on which side you are on. But James Grahame of Claverhouse was a real man, and his breastplate is at Blair Castle to this day.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 9 (See page 473)

PAUL ON THE AREOPAGUS

Thus we dissent from the view of Conzelmann: :

' Inasmuch as Luke draws upon the form of secular historiography, we must interpret the Areopagus speech first of all as a literary speech by Luke, not a real sermon by Paul. We take this procedure for granted in our interpretation of the speeches of Thucydides, for example....since both the setting and the speech are the author's work, the details related are of no value for the reconstruction of the individual historical events. The value of the description rests not in the historical worth of its details as sources of information about Paul's conduct, but in the fact that it documents for us how a Christian about A.D.100 reacts to the pagan milieu and meets it from the position of his faith.' (TSL p218)

Firstly the position about the speeches of Thucydides is by no means as simple as that. (R.C.Jebb, in *Hellenica*, ed.E.Abbott, p.294-296) and secondly, if we extend the parallel we shall have to conclude that the work of Thucydides tells us nothing about the Peloponnesian war, but is of value only in so far as it gives us insight into the mentality of the author.

One could argue that a sermon which lead to conversions, even if only a few, can hardly be regarded as a 'flop'! But Luke certainly presents it as less

than a success. Could he have had a theological motive for this? Might he wish to show that there is no necessary precondition for acceptance of the gospel? All depends on faith, and the wind of the spirit blows where it lists! Did Luke have in mind a parallel to the rejection of Jesus in Nazareth? Paul 'went out from among them' (17;33) just as Jesus 'passing through the midst...went away' (Luke 4;30)?

In this question of delicate literary judgement we note that the speech occurs in a setting which is part of the most 'historical' and 'unedifying' in the whole of Acts. Moreover, Luke's theological interpreters cannot have it both ways: if Luke's main concern was to present a Divine Man striding from victory unto victory, he certainly did not succeed in doing so in his account of Paul at Athens.

ADDITIONAL NOTE 10.(see page 504)

ACTS AND THE CHURCH OF THE LORD.

H.W.Turner: 'Profile through preaching', p.69: The texts used by the Church of the Lord turn out to be a few old favourites. 'If, for example, we examine the 6 public addresses containing the kerygma in Acts as given by Dodd, we find a total of 23 references to this body of material. Of these 2;17 (x7) may be discounted.. for this verse from Joel would be a favourite wherever it occurred. Of the remaining 16 verses, eleven concern

the concluding section of each address - the summons to repentance; three refer to the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, and there are two from the long historical preface on Israel in the speech of 13;17-41. In other words the historical exposition receives scant attention, and interest is shown only in the risen Christ and in the call to repent and believe...These results are in accord with the emphases we found in the use of the gospels. There is little interest in historical narrative as such. The only part of the biographical and historical material on Paul to attract any degree of attention is the part which may call the superhistorical; the experience on the Damascus road in 9;1-19, where there are 16 references, with 4 more on the same theme in 26;14-16. Of the ten favourite texts in Acts the only one that is primarily historical is 8;30 (x6) and the story of the Ethiopian eunuch may be presumed to have special interest in Africa...The use made of Acts is determined by the dominant interests of the Church of the Lord, and serves to clarify just where these lie....'

In correspondence Prof Turner mentions that 'the small degree of interest in Luke and Acts shown by the Aladura Church occurred...in a survey of Anglican preaching in Leicestershire, and in two individual ministers' records, one Baptist, one Methodist. So I am wondering if it is a regular pattern throughout all the churches.'

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